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ABSTRACT

This publication presents a case study of the public school desegregation and redesign program of the East Baton Rouge Parish (Louisiana) School System, focusing on the 5 years from 1987 to 1992. Chapter 1 describes the setting and background, the sociocultural history of the area since pre-Revolutionary War days, the role and treatment of African Americans, and the events leading up to desegregation and redesign. Chapter 2 presents a history of the redesign plan from 1987 to 1992, including school restructuring ideology, implementation, and the marketing of school enhancements. Chapter 3 discusses the school desegregation and redesign efforts through a review of research, media coverage, and evaluations; and it contains field study/participant observation data for this case study. Chapter 4 presents and analyzes findings and conclusions in light of public school issues in Connecticut where desegregation and school redesign are also issues. Included are 4 maps, 6 tables, 6 illustrations, a 102-item bibliography, a list of public school marketing brochures, a glossary, a Baton Rouge chronology, a Baton Rouge events calendar, and the author's letter of introduction to the public schools studied. Also included are extensive footnotes for each chapter. (JB)

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PUBLIC SCHOOL DESEGREGATION/REDESIGN

A CASE STUDY IN EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH, LOUISIANA

Dr. Frank Andrews Stone
Professor of International Education
The University of Connecticut

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Frank Andrews Stone

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DEDICATION

This study is for my friend

Elizabeth Horton Sheff

and her son

Milo Sheff,

the plaintiff in Sheff v. O'Neill

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Acknowledgements

This inquiry began with a brief two day trip to first get acquainted with Baton Rouge and southern Louisiana in late May, 1991. A period of documentary research followed before I was able to carry out a field study of the public school desegregation and redesign efforts in East Baton Rouge Parish (similar to a county) from January 6-16, 1992.

My documentary resources were enriched by items in the collections and the assistance of librarians at eight institutions. I am most grateful to them.

East Baton Rouge Parish Main Library, 7711 Goodwood Blvd., Baton Rouge, LA

The Lower Mississippi River Valley Collection, Special Collections, Hill Library, The Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA

The Homer Babbidge Library, The University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT

The Jessup Library, Bar Harbor, ME

The Louisiana State Archives, 3851 Essen Lane, Baton Rouge, LA

The Louisiana State Library, 760 Riverside Mall, Baton Rouge, LA

The Morrison Library, The Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA

Thorndike Library, College of the Atlantic, Bar Harbor, ME

Considerable information and perspectives were gleaned from articles or editorials in The Morning Advocate, The State-Times, and the South Baton Rouge Journal. Nightly news coverage of public school issues on television station WAFB, Channel Nine, Baton Rouge, heightened my understanding.

The staff at the East Baton Rouge School Board Offices, 1050 South Foster Drive , assisted me to obtain relevant publications. I also attended a confrontational meeting of the School Board when the representatives of the school employees' unions presented their disagreements with impending board policy. The personnel at the School Redesign Office, Valley Park Administration Center, 4510 Bawell Street, kindly discussed the operation of the school redesign program with me, gave me additional materials about it, and facilitated participant observation in three schools. I was able to visit classes and talk

with administrators and teachers at Capitol Middle School, 4200 Gus Young Avenue; Kenilworth Middle School, 7600 Boone Drive; and Winbourne Elementary School, 4501 Winbourne Avenue.

It would have been much harder to carry out this field study without the hospitality and cooperation of our daughter, Ruth Sevim Stone. She is currently a masters' student of cultural geography at LSU. Ruth helped me work out routes to get to my destinations and accompanied me on trips to see the Acadian Historical Museum in Lafayette; visit the Amistad Research Center, Tulane University, New Orleans; tour the Saint Francisville area of West Feliciana Parish; examine the LSU Rural Life Museum and Village, Baton Rouge; and travel to Grand Isle, LA overlooking the Gulf of Mexico only about a hundred fifty miles from Baton Rouge.

I appreciate the interest of my colleagues and students, who encouraged me to risk carrying out this research project. The Head of the Educational Leadership Department at The University of Connecticut, where my Educational Studies Section homebase is located, gave me permission to be away for the time required for the study. Ms. Kathryn R. Dreher, Chair, Public Education Committee, Connecticut Conference, United Church of Christ, wrote a letter supporting the inquiry. All along my fellow members of this group have encouraged me by their interest and deep concern for integrated and multicultural education.

The funding for this research came completely from personal sources. No public funds were expended. No grants from private foundations, government agencies, or special interest groups were received. The research report, however, is being issued as a publication in the Urban Education Reports Series of The Isaac N. Thut World Education Center (TWEC) with which I have been affiliated for more than twenty years. None of the individuals or institutions named in the acknowledgements are responsible for the information conveyed in this essay or the opinions expressed in it - which are solely the author's.

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Storrs, Connecticut
February, 1992

Foreword

The aim of this inquiry is to present a case study of the public school desegregation and redesign program of the East Baton Rouge Parish School System in Louisiana, focusing on the last five years since 1987. The motive is to better understand the approaches taken by the Louisianans. Their successes and failures will be identified and assessed, not in order to find faults with the efforts in Baton Rouge, but rather to expand the horizons of educational policy makers in Connecticut who must contend with an unacceptable amount of defacto segregation in the public schools of our state.

Attention has been drawn to Connecticut's problems with quality inequities and ethnic/racial isolation in the schools. These reflect housing patterns and socio-economic discrimination. Reports of the school conditions have repeatedly been issued by the Connecticut State Department of Education. Some attempts have been made to intervene where particularly gross inbalances exist. Currently a lawsuit has been brought by the NAACP and other organizations in the Connecticut Superior Court. The plaintiffs claim that the public schools of the Greater Hartford area are defacto segregated. They are therefore unconstitutional, it is argued, according to the provisions of our state constitution.

Regardless of the outcome of Sheff v. O'Neill, it is clear that Connecticut's public schools will have to be restructured in order to provide equal opportunities and high quality education for all of our citizens. There is a grand debate rising about how these goals can best be achieved. This case study is offered, therefore, as possibly containing some suggestive clues about our options.

No claim is made that any of the methods or programs that have been used in the East Baton Rouge Parish Public School System can, or should, be directly imported to Connecticut. The conditions in Connecticut and Louisiana are too different, and those between Greater Baton Rouge and Greater Hartford too diverse, for easy transfer. But it is being claimed that educational policy makers in our state can benefit from learning more about and reflecting on the rationale, implementation, and experiences of the East Baton Rouge Schools Redesign Plan during the last five years. It should be possible to avoid some mistakes. No ready-made answers will be supplied. We can, however, acquire knowledge about a concrete situation in which school restructuring was attempted in a major American school system. Hopefully, this will be a contribution as we in Connecticut make our own schooling choices and set new educational priorities for the twenty-first century.

PUBLIC SCHOOL DESEGREGATION/REDESIGN

A CASE STUDY IN EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH, LOUISIANA

Frank Andrews Stone

Chapter One

Introduction

Greater Baton Rouge, LA and Greater Hartford, CT face some parallel educational dilemmas. It must be clearly understood at the beginning of this inquiry that the public school systems in both of these metropolitan areas are confronting major ongoing predicaments. They are not simply contending with a problem that has a single, feasible solution. We will be examining the entangled economic, educational, political, religious and social dimensions of the Baton Rouge situation. As will quickly become apparent, the realities in the East Baton Rouge Parish (EBRP) have produced many "entangled connections (that) overwhelm our rationality, producing feelings of helplessness. Difficulties arise when a problem cannot be solved on the basis of existing scientific principles." [1]

Connecticut's Capital Region also manifestly has so-called "educational problems" that are "complex, untidy, and insoluble." Both sites, in fact, are confronting true educational dilemmas. A dilemma differs from a resolvable problem in several ways. First, "dilemmas are conflict-filled situations that require choices because competing, highly prized values cannot be fully satisfied." Second, "they become predicaments rather than problems when constraints and uncertainty make it impossible for any prized value to triumph." Among the array of constraints operating in both the Baton Rouge and Hartford contexts are cultural heritage, laws, money, time, human and material resources, perspectives, perceptions, aspirations and assumptions. Third, "dilemmas, then, involve choices, often moral ones. They end up with good-enough compromises, not neat solutions. We 'satisfice' when we cope with dilemmas. [2]

The aim of this study of desegregation and redesign in the EBRP School System isn't to provide the model for a "quick fix" to Connecticut educators. It is also not intended as an evaluation of the EBRP efforts since 1987. Rather, there are enough similarities between Baton Rouge and Hartford to make reflecting on the EBRP case study worthwhile. At the same time, the differences in the conditions of these two metropolitan areas are great enough to preclude any direct and immediate transfers of approaches from EBRP to Greater Hartford or the entire State of Connecticut. On the other hand, however, it seems to me that some intriguing things were implemented in EBRP. They

appear to have sometimes achieved positive results. Other interventions failed to produce the intended outcomes. It should be an advantage to educational policymakers in Connecticut to be able to reflect on the EBRP experiences. At the very least, they should be able to avoid some mistakes. Hopefully, they may also succeed in identifying some promising options.

Socio-Cultural Background

> "It (Baton Rouge) has real Indians, French nobility, English redcoats, Spanish dragoons, American flatboat men, Union and Confederate generals galore, and, to top it all, an American President (General Zackary Taylor)." [3]

Reflect on this rather romantic quotation from an historical sketch about Louisiana's capital city, and you will recognize that approximately a third of the population seems to have no forebears worth mentioning. This author has simply written African Americans out of her characterization of the city's heritage. This is an example of the fact that school policies are always implemented within socio-cultural contexts. EBRP, Louisiana, in fact, has a very rich and diverse multicultural history made by people of many ethnic groups and races. It is the metaculture underlying today's events and issues.

There were American Indian residents of the area long before the Europeans came. We know, for instance, that when a French exploration party reached the area in 1699, the Houma tribe consisted of about 350 families.[4]

The explorers had been sent by Louis XIV, King of France, for whom Louisiana had been named as a huge new French possession in 1682, by Rene-Robert Cavalier, Sieur de la Salle. Sixteen years later a French Canadian, Pierre le Moyne, Sieur d'Iberville, was commissioned to examine the territory. Assigned two ships, La Badine and La Marin, the French came to Mobile Bay in present-day Alabama at the end of January, 1699. They found the mouth of the Mississippi River in February, and their up-river journey was made in long boats. The French party first saw the bluffs marking our site, which they called ecorts, on March 17, 1699.

This was the place that the native people called Istrouma. The word meant "red stick" referring to a post painted red that marked the boundary between the lands of the Houma and Bayagoula tribes. This

accounts for the name which the French chose for it, Baton Rouge. The first French describe huts covered with palmetto leaves erected by the Houma Indians who came here to hunt and fish. So the area of today's EBRP wasn't empty or unoccupied at the beginning of its recorded history.[5]

These French European beginnings set EBRP off from southern New England which mainly goes back to English colonists at Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay. The Dutch explored some of the region bordering on Long Island Sound. They built a trading post on the bank of the Connecticut River at the site of today's Hartford. But it was English Puritan settlers from Massachusetts who founded the Connecticut Colony at Wethersfield, Hartford, and Windsor. They were also the founders of the New Haven Colony, and the fort at Saybrook. All this happened in Connecticut history after the mid-1630's. EBRP apparently wasn't settled for years after the first French landing. A grant for it, called a concession, had been given to the Dartaguette family of France. An entry in the journal of Bernard Diron Dartaguette for December 31, 1722 calls the settlement, which had by then been planted by the Compagnie de Indies, Dirombourg or Baton Rouge.[6]

Unfortunately the beginnings of French Baton Rouge were inauspicious. The settlers seem to have lacked the necessary basic support from their sponsors in the motherland. They lacked supplies and labor. The tiny Baton Rouge settlement, therefore, simply dropped out of sight. We are told that it had almost a "lost colony" quality about it. [7]

When the Seven Years War was ended by the Treaty of Paris in 1763, its terms awarded to the British East and West Florida from Spain and part of today's Louisiana north of the Isle of Orleans and east of the Mississippi River from France. This meant that the English were now the masters of abandoned and unimportant Baton Rouge. British ships were no longer to be stopped and searched by the French at New Orleans. They now had the legal right to sail up the Mississippi River to get to their new outposts, one of which was at Baton Rouge. When the British actually took over, however, the neighborhood of Baton Rouge consisted of a decrepit fortlet and a few huts. Smuggling was widespread at this time, and traders were bringing in African slaves. The blacks numbered as many as the free whites.

> The British built a large warehouse at Baton Rouge which became a contraband depot. They converted two vessels with shelves and counters to be floating stores. Baton Rouge was now a commercial center meeting the needs of the planters up and down the river. Subsequent grants of land were made to British officers and soldiers

who had fought in the French and Indian War. They stimulated the growth of Baton Rouge. [8]

The plantation economy which dominated EBRP up until the end of the nineteenth century had its origin in this era. Land was easy to obtain and then an aspiring British planter would purchase a ship. It would sail to Jamaica and take aboard a load of slaves. The whole venture could be financed by selling the ship and some of the slaves when they got back to Louisiana. The remaining slaves would then be used to establish a plantation where crops such as cotton, indigo and sugar were grown. This was the start of a good life for a tiny elite of British planters and traders. Many eventually became millionaires.

The American Revolution, however, put the British at Baton Rouge in a dangerous position. They had prospered as loyal British subjects, but were now caught inbetween the Americans to the north who demanded their support and the Spanish who declared war on Great Britain in June, 1779. The Spanish attacked and captured Fort New Richmond at Baton Rouge on September 21, 1779. The whole Lower Mississippi River Valley below Natchez was soon under Spanish control. The British, actually, had ruled Baton Rouge for only sixteen years, from 1763 to 1779. But the leading residents of the district, being English-speaking and Protestant, were unhappy to be new subjects of His Catholic Majesty, Carlos III, of Spain. Although there were some uprisings and rebellions, they were crushed and Spanish rule persisted. Legal documents in Baton Rouge under the Spanish, recognizing the clash of tongues there, were trilingual in English, French and Spanish. Almost 4,000 people inhabited Baton Rouge by 1805 and the town had briefly been the capital of the Spanish Province of West Florida. [9]

By now Baton Rouge was a pawn in the diplomatic and territorial "chess match" being played by England, France and Spain, and the young United States. The Spanish rulers had revoked the previous right of Americans to deposit goods at the port for trans-shipment to New Orleans. Spain had returned Louisiana to Napoleon Bonapart of France in 1800, but, of course, this transaction did not include Baton Rouge which was then part of West Florida.

At this point the story becomes more familiar to most Americans. Robert Livingston was sent to Paris in December, 1801. The Louisiana Purchase was negotiated there and agreed to in 1803, greatly enlarging the territory of the United States. Livingston and Monroe knew full well that West Florida was not part of the Purchase. When the U.S. Congress enacted legislation for the new territory in 1804, however,

West Florida was included as if it had also been purchased. Still under de-facto Spanish control, Baton Rouge's citizens found themselves bordered on three sides by American territory. By this time many of the white settlers were themselves Americans.

A series of confrontations and riots ensued in Baton Rouge. They culminated in an insurrection against the Spanish that established an independent West Florida Republic. Its new flag had a single five pointed star on a field of blue. The star symbolized the MasonicOrder's principles because the leaders of the rebellion had held their secret meetings at Masonic lodges. This Masonic motif demonstrates the anti-Spanish Catholic outlook of the local leaders at this time. The West Florida Republic was "fruit ripe for picking," however. United States troops peacefully occupied the town, fort and entire district of Baton Rouge on December 10, 1810. EBRP was now officially American.

This quick sketch of the early history of Baton Rouge may seem unrelated to current school desegregation and redesign there. Yet a local historian comes to the following conclusion.

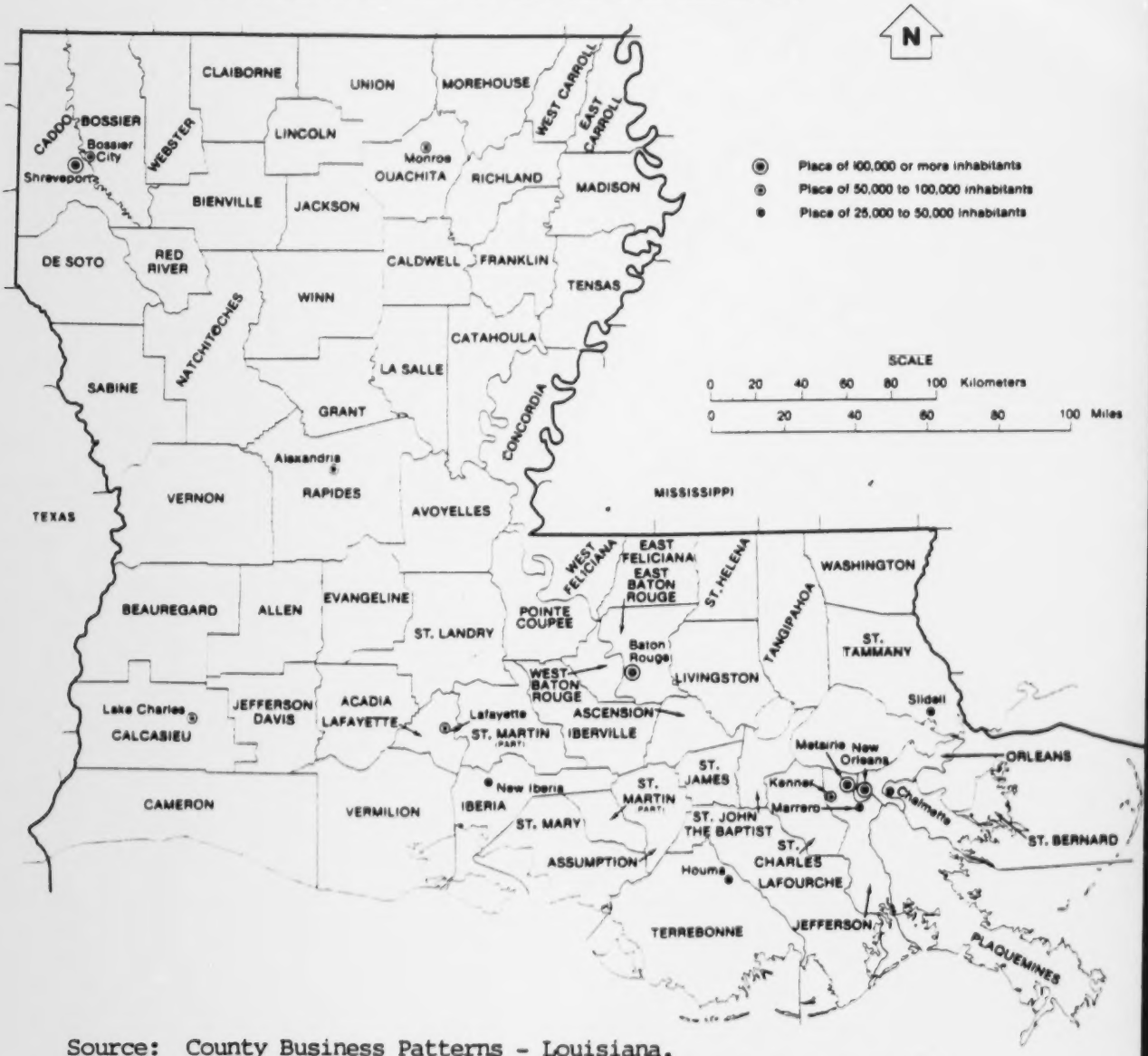
> The years from 1699 to 1812 left their mark on the city. Influenced by its various colonial overlords, French, English, and Spanish, Baton Rouge has a unique personality. One finds a certain Anglo-Saxon energy and abruptness tempered by a trace of Gallic charm and a Spanish love of organization. An apparently leisurely pace, a remnant of its plantation economy, is deceiving, because Baton Rougeans march eagerly to the double time of modern commerce and industry. The energy needed for this quickened pace may well have its source in the broad mixture of nationalities and races which resulted in a kind of hybrid strength. [11]

Other writers stress this multiculturalism even more strongly. When interpreting the population of the Florida Parishes of Louisiana (those once comprising the Spanish Province of West Florida and including EBRP) one states that,

> Behind the planters came the Blacks, as slaves and later, when the post-bellum cotton economy dwindled, as sharecroppers. In the meantime, French, Spanish, and German settlers moved in from the south, to fish and hunt around the lakes and rivers; and so did the freeman of color, the Black Creoles . . . [12]

MAP ONE

THE LOCATION OF EBRP IN THE STATE OF LOUISIANA



Source: County Business Patterns - Louisiana. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1988, p. IX.

The experiences of the Civil War and the post-war Reconstruction Era left an indelible impression on EBRP. The people of Baton Rouge at this time, however, were certainly of more than one mind. A historian tells us that,

> Though the Baton Rouge population was more pro-Union than pro-secession, many in the end succumbed to the hysteria, believing that the North would not fight to hold the Southern states within the framework of the Union, or that the war, if it did come, would be a short one. [13]

The ordinance of secession was adopted on January 26, 1861. 'General' John McGrath left this moving description of the United States flag being pulled down in Baton Rouge.

> A sailor climbed up and unfastened it, ripped it loose and let it fall through the air. There was a crowd standing around watching it fall. Every one of us loved that flag. Our fathers had marched under it to Mexico. These very buildings had been used by Zackary Taylor - the man who led the army to Monterey. The flag of the United States had been our flag, and yet we felt that it must go and our own flag rise in its place. There was a deathly silence while the flag was falling through the bright afternoon sunlight. How slowly it fell! [14]

On the evening of May 7, 1862, however, the Union gunboat Iroquois anchored in the Mississippi River off Baton Rouge. The next day the United States flag was once more flying over the town's Arsenal. Later that day Admiral Farragut arrived in his flagship, Hartford. Originally the town was occupied without violence, but after several incidents, Baton Rouge was put under the control of Union troops on May 29, 1862. Confederate forces tried to drive the Northern soldiers out of Baton Rouge on August 5, 1862, but were unable to do so. The town remained under Union control, but the Confederates had a stronghold at nearby Port Hudson which is also in EBRP.

Faced with the Union occupation, many white residents of Baton Rouge fled the town. It became a haven for former slaves who had been uprooted from their earlier life on plantations in the area. These blacks were referred to by the Northerners as "contraband" or "intelligent contraband." When the former white citizens of Baton Rouge came back to the town by early 1864, their former homes were often either

gone altogether, or occupied by strangers. Sometimes these were former slaves who earned their living by boarding Union officers. A local citizen wrote in March, 1865, "Take the Army out, and four-fifths of the Town would be Negroes." [15]

As we have seen, actually the "Americanization" of Baton Rouge had begun from 1810 to 1860 when the pattern of the Upland South culture was implanted. But then from 1860 to 1880 it was overhauled by the struggles of the Civil War and the Reconstruction Era.

> There was a resulting poverty for both Blacks and whites that endured until the beginning of industrial lumbering after about 1880. This spread throughout the pine woods, a corner of which lie in East Baton Rouge Parish. New steam engines brought greater mobility and more awareness of the nation as a whole. Magazines, mail service, and catalogues began arriving by 1900. About 1920 brought a new stratum to the previous layers of ante-bellum immigration and post-Civil War Reconstruction. This was a time when national trends influenced the region. New planted towns sprung up along the right-of-ways of the railroads that formed an "iron Mississippi" from Chicago to New Orleans, and from Baton Rouge to Mobile. Zackary was one of these way-stations. Baker, once a railroad stop, is revived as a Baton Rouge dormitory. [16]

This author, Milton B. Newton, Jr., identifies what he terms "the cultural strata" of EBRP. According to him, it consists of a half dozen layers.

Native American Tracer
A French Outpost
Scots - English
Upland South Regional Culture
African Americans
Americanization [17]

Added to these six strata, it would seem, there would have to be a seventh in order to account for immigrants to EBRP in the twentieth century.

There is an Italian community of Baton Rouge, for example, some

of whom are of Sicilian origin. At the local St. Anthony Roman Catholic Church, St. Joseph's Day is still an important event. It is celebrated by the Grandsons of Italy, a fraternal organization. At nearby St. Jean Vianney Roman Catholic Church, the congregation invites people with Hansen's disease and retarded children as their special guests for this annual occasion. [18]

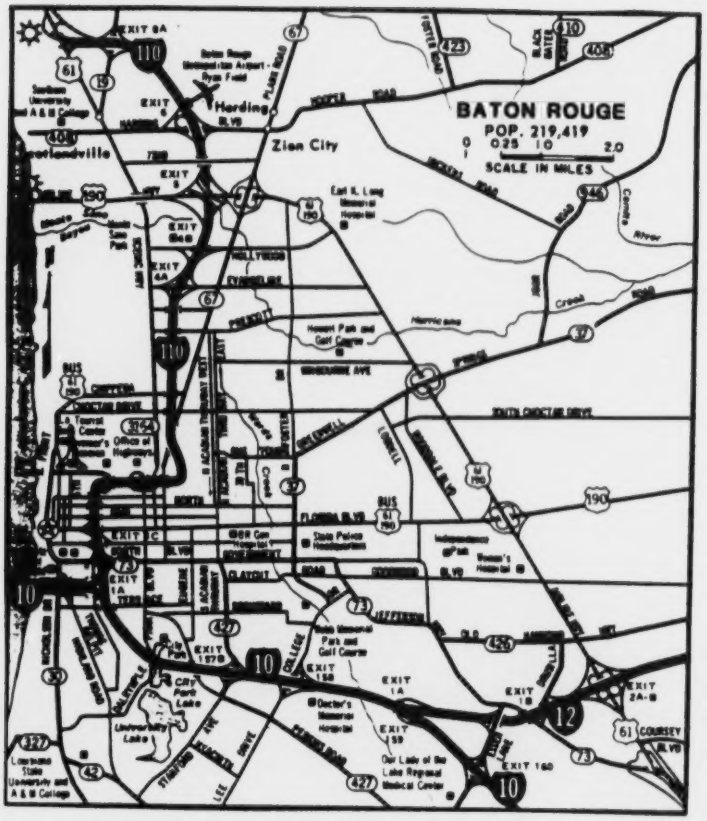
As was previously noted, Baton Rouge had a small black population before the Civil War. During Reconstruction the freedmen migrated from plantations to the town. They established a sizeable community in "Catfish Town" along the east bank of the Mississippi River. Baton Rouge was fifty-nine percent black in 1880, but this racial percentage dropped to thirty-nine percent black by 1920 due to the absorption of other groups. [19]

Even today the residential neighborhoods of Baton Rouge's African American citizens are largely segregated in three areas: Eden Park, Scotlandville, and the part of the city between the Louisiana State University (LSU) campus and downtown. Many of the blacks who live in Baton Rouge today have their personal roots or family connections in surrounding EBRP communities such as Baywood, Denham Springs, Greenwell Springs, Port Hudson, Pride or Zackary. It seems that African Americans were able to obtain small plots of land in these outlying places so that they could have garden plots and be basically self-sufficient. Since the 1930's, however, there has been a massive migration of rural blacks into urban Baton Rouge.

As recently as 1960 the city's population, when its land area was only thirty-one square miles, was 29.9 percent black. By 1980 the size of Baton Rouge had grown to 61.6 square miles and now its population was 36.39 percent black. These African Americans moved to find employment in industry or jobs as domestic workers. There also were no advanced secondary or higher education opportunities for them on the fringes of EBRP, so they had to come into the city in order to attend the segregated schools of the period. A third factor that brought black families into Baton Rouge was undoubtedly the vigorous segregated churches they found there that met many of their cultural, social, and spiritual needs. Today there are more than a hundred-fifty African Methodist Episcopal, Baptist, Charismatic, Church of God in Christ, Full-Gospel, Pentecostal, and Seventh-Day Adventist congregations in Baton Rouge ministering to African Americans from storefronts to near-cathedrals. As much socialization and identity formation unquestionably occurs in these churches, they must be an important factor in the growing up experiences of many black children and young people. [20]

MAP TWO

BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA, 1992



Source: Official Highway Map. Baton Rouge, LA:
The Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development

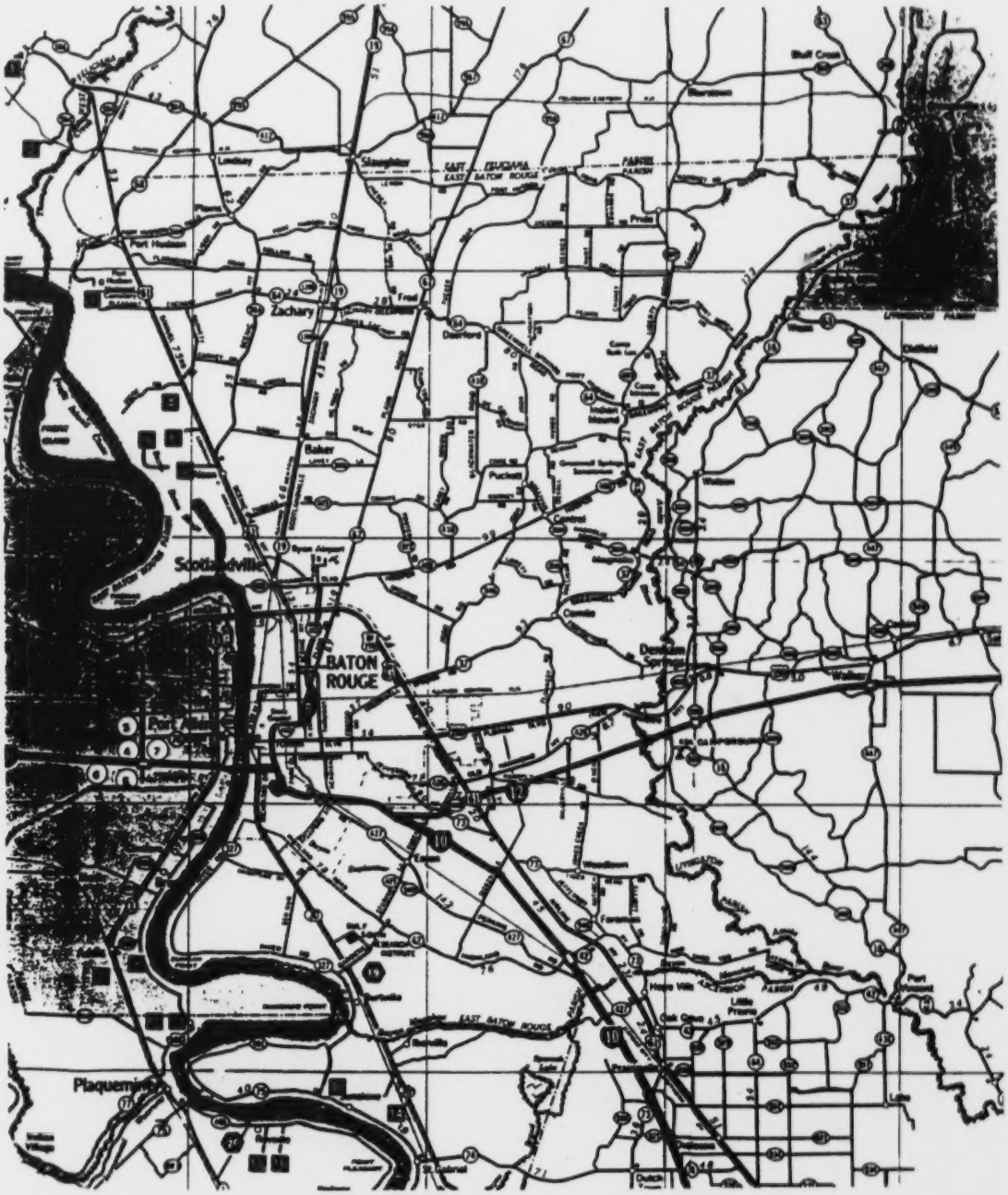
Their religion also appears to be important to many of Baton Rouge's white citizens. Twenty-eight parishes comprise the Roman Catholic Diocese of Baton Rouge. Some have African American communicants, and the Roman Catholic parochial schools have long been desegregated. There are the so-called "mainline" Protestant denominations represented in Baton Rouge such as Episcopal, Lutheran, Presbyterian and United Methodist. A large part of Protestant Baton Rouge, however, is fundamental and revivalistic. One encounters Assemblies of God, Southern Baptist, Church of Christ, Church of God, and United Pentecostal congregations. A prominent institution of learning in the city is the Jimmy Swaggart Bible College. Many maintain Christian Day Schools, often called Christian Academies, most of which must be racially segregated. There are also several wards of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormon) in Baton Rouge, as well as two synagogues, Beth Shalom and B'nai Israel, which was founded in 1858. [21]

Beginning with the Standard Oil Company refinery built in Baton Rouge in 1909, the city has become the hub of a huge petrochemical complex. Utilizing the natural resources of EBRP - petroleum, natural gas, sulfur, salt, and three hundred billion gallons of fresh water drawn daily from the Mississippi River - the area has been heavily industrialized. Synthetic rubber and plastics are manufactured in or near Baton Rouge, along with concrete, foodstuffs, paper, scientific instruments, tile, and wood products. Another major source of employment is the Port of Baton Rouge, which can handle both river barges and ocean vessels. Along the entire Gulf of Mexico, it is the port located the farthest inland. Close to Baton Rouge is also the Port Allen lock on the Gulf Intra-coastal Waterway between Florida and Texas. So more than thirty million tons of water-borne freight passes through EBRP every year. [22]

Baton Rouge became Louisiana's state capital in 1849. The city's focal center today is the thirty-four story state capitol building constructed in 1931. State agencies have their central offices in Baton Rouge, making civil service an important employment source. LSU moved to Baton Rouge in 1869 and construction on its present campus began in 1923. Southern University came from New Orleans in 1914. There are also state schools for the blind and deaf in Baton Rouge. All of these institutions contribute to EBRP'sjob market and also have brought to the area a remarkably diverse population whose educational needs must be met by the public schools in the 1990's. The 1980 census, for example, listed considerable numbers of American Indians, Asian Indians, Mexicans, Cubans, Chinese and Vietnamese. Almost 98,000 people in EBRP at that time, in fact, listed their ancestry as other than the fifteen major groups being counted in 1980! Since then, cultural pluralism has increased, posing a challenge to the local school system. [23]

MAP THREE

EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH, LOUISIANA, 1990



Source: J.P. King, "Metro-State Map," Baton Rougage, Louisiana, City Street Map and Metro-State Map. Baton Rouge: Sightseeing Baton Rouge, 1990.

The Structure of Baton Rouge and EBRP

> The present status of education in Louisiana comes from political, economic, ethnic, geographical and social conditions which were factors in its development. [24]

Public school systems function within social structures that affect the schools in many ways. The population magnitude of the community being served by the schools is one important factor. Data concerning Baton Rouge and EBRP exists for the past hundred fifty years. It is presented on Table One. When scanning these statistics, however, readers should recognize that the city was enlarged from five to thirty-five square miles in January, 1949, accounting for the big population jump at that time. Between April, 1955 and December, 1965 the municipal limits were again enlarged to encompass 38.78 more square miles. Baton Rouge thereby became the city with the second largest population in Louisiana, after New Orleans, which is only seventy-seven miles away.

The present governance structure of the City of Baton Rouge and EBRP goes back forty-five years to 1947 when much of the present plan was adopted. The City-Parish Government went into effect on January 1, 1949. This abolished the previous "police jury" approach and the old city council and commissions system. The city limits were substantially extended to incorporate the large numbers of people who lived in un-incorporated areas. A consolidated format of a mayor and council for both the city and parish was instituted.

There have been a number of subsequent technical changes in this consolidated plan. Some were approved by the voters in 1952, and other amendments were made to the City-Parish Charter in 1956. There have been additional amendments in 1964, 1966, 1970, 1972, 1979 and 1982. The last one formed one governing body called the Metropolitan Council headed by a Mayor-President. Individual budgets and accounts, however, are still maintained for each of the political units involved. These are kept separate and expended as authorized. This political structure explains why there is a single EBRP school system with one Board of Education and Superintendent of Schools. [25]

The residential distribution of people of various ethnicities and races in EBRP is (according to the 1990 census) quite segregated. This data is presented on Table Two. The four districts with the highest proportion of black residents are written in bold type. It is easy to

TABLE ONE

BATON ROUGE AND EBRP
POPULATION STATISTICS,
1840-1990

Date	Baton Rouge	EBRP
1840	2,269	5,869
1850	3,905	16,046
1860	5,429	-
1870	6,498	17,816
1880	7,197	19,996
1890	10,478	25,922
1900	11,269	31,153
1910	14,897	34,590
1920	21,782	44,513
1930	30,729	66,208
1940	34,719	88,415
1950	125,629	158,236
1960	152,419	210,000
1970	166,000	
1980	219,419	366,191
1990	219,531	380,105

Sources: The data through 1960 is from Evelyn Thom, Baton Rouge Story, p. 37. The 1970 from Statistical Abstract of the U.S., 111 th ed., 1991. That for 1980 is from "Louisiana," The Encyclopedia Americana, p. 786. The 1990 figure is from Summary Population and Housing Characteristics. Louisiana. 1990 Census of Population and Housing. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration, Bureau of the Census, 1990, CPH - 1 - 20, p. 34, Table 3.

TABLE TWO

ETHNIC/RACIAL POPULATION DISTRIBUTION IN EBRP,

1990 [26]

East Baton Rouge Parish:	All Persons	White	Black	Am.Ind.	Asian/ Pacific Islander	Other
Total	380,105	240,614	132,328	615	5,351	1,197
District 1 (Part of Baker and Zackary City)	29,683	21,283	8,259	48	69	24
District 2 (Baker City and Baton Rouge City)	22,664	2,160	20,446	26	15	17
District 3 (Baker City, Baton Rouge City, Brownfields, Merrydale, Monticello)	31,878	18,806	12,683	53	267	69
District 4 (Baton Rouge City)	37,818	36,480	916	73	258	91
District 5 (Baton Rouge City and Merrydale)	26,494	4,878	21,453	32	117	14
District 6 (Baton Rouge City, and Monticello)	28,341	17,861	9,933	64	377	106
District 7 (Baton Rouge City)	25,223	1,880	23,232	33	54	24
District 8 (Baton Rouge City)	27,512	24,826	2,038	45	499	104
District 9 (Baton Rouge City, Oak Hills Place, Old Jefferson, Shenandoah, St. George)	51,042	45,845	3,866	110	1,024	197
District 10 (Baton Rouge City)	25,747	7,969	16,324	34	1,259	161
District 11 (Baton Rouge City, Inniswold, Westminster)	33,652	27,889	5,394	42	215	112
District 12 (Baton Rouge City, Gardere)	40,049	30,735	7,784	55	1,197	278

to identify the sections of the parish that are overwhelmingly white. Scrutiny will show that most of the Asian/Pacific Islander population is concentrated in districts nine, ten and twelve. Overall, EBRP today is about two-thirds white and one third black. The only other appreciable minority is the Asian/Pacific Islander one numbering 5,351. There is a small group of people designated "other" which must be Hispanics, mostly Cubans and Mexicans. Only 615 American Indians live in EBRP, and many of these do not come from local tribes. Besides the twelve census districts reported on Table Two, there is also an unorganized industrial complex in Baton Rouge City which has only two white residents. [26]

In keeping with the dilemma hypothesis suggested at the beginning of this chapter, we want to suggest at this point that the factors affecting school desegregation are not simply racial. An equally key matter seems to be socio-economic realities. Table Three presents the buying power distribution in EBRP. After examining this data, readers can recognize that, in general, the northern parts of the parish are poorer and the southern sections wealthier. Scotlandville, an almost totally black community, is a medium low and low wealth zone. So is much of inner city Baton Rouge. Some white citizens live in these areas but most of their residents are black. Inversely, where there is a degree of integrated housing, it is almost entirely in medium high and higher wealth zones. In other words, while the improvement of the economic condition of minorities probably isn't the sole means of desegregating society, it seems evident that class differences do affect public schools. Middle and upper class students of whatever race or ethnicity are more welcome than lower class students who are likely to be caught up in the so-called "culture of poverty."

Finally, regarding social structure, the researcher wondered about the comparative economic infastructures of EBRP and Hartford County, Connecticut. At issue here is the resources to carry out school desegregation and redesign in the two metropolitan areas. The data summarized in Table Four is for 1987/1988. Admittedly, the recession has probably had an impact on both economies. There has been some loss of employers and jobs in both in the last five years. Even so, however, the data can be interpreted to indicate that we in the Capital Region of Connecticut still have the resources with which to bring about change in our public schools, if this becomes our goal. My reasoning is that if, with considerably less in its economic infastructure, EBRP could undertake school desegregation and redesign, it is well within the means of Greater Hartford to do so, if that becomes the aim of its citizens.

TABLE THREE

BUYING POWER DISTRIBUTION IN BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA,

1992

Note: The buying power estimates are based on census tract data.

$A = higher wealth zones

Southeast suburbs such as 20, 37.03, 38.01, 38.03, 39.02, 44, 45.02 and areas in South Baton Rouge such as 26.02, 29, 40.01 and 40.02.

$B = medium high wealth zones

Mid-East areas 32.02, 35.01, 35.03 and 36; as well as Baton Rouge areas such as 17 and 19.

$C = medium wealth zones

North EBRP in Baker 42.01, 42.02 and other northern areas such as 31, 32.01 and some Baton Rouge neighborhoods such as 18 south of Florida Blvd. and 36.02 north of Florida Blvd. to the east.

$D = medium low wealth zones

Outlying east and west areas in north EBRP 41, 42.03, and 43; Scotlandville zones 2, 4, 33, and 34 and inner city Baton Rouge 11.01 and 16.

$E = low wealth zones (poverty pockets)

North Scotlandville, 31; and inner city Baton Rouge zones 1, 3, 5, 9, 10, 21, 30, 30.1.

Source: Cole's Cross Reference Directory. Baton Rouge and Capital Marketing Area, 1992 Issue.
Lincoln, NE: Cole Publications, 1991.

TABLE FOUR

COMPARATIVE COUNTY BUSINESS PATTERNS:
EBRP AND HARTFORD

	EBRP	Hartford
Total number of employees	140,162	478,270
Annual payroll ($1,000)	$2,831,972	$11,105,693
Work establishments	9,685	23,673
Employing 50-99	285	798
100-249	137	497
250-499	30	116
500-999	15	40
1,000 or more	7	43
Types of Work		
Construction	20,461	22,660
Manufacturing	12,546	114,543
Transportation and Public Utilities	7,980	25,184
Wholesale Trade	9,813	27,045
Retail Trade	32,578	81,649
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	11,565	84,452
Services	43,137	119,777
Under Services:		
Elementary and Secondary Schools	1,542	2,645
Vocational Schools	282	381
Educational Services	53	337
Colleges and universities	3,260	3,650

Sources: County Business Patterns, 1987. "Connecticut," CBP-87-8. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Commerce, 1987, pp. 30-40.

County Business Patterns, 1988. "Louisiana," Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Commerce, 1990, pp. 46-51.

The Background of School Desegregation in EBRP

> The earlier battles by which racially separate schools were replaced by those in which there is required intermingling of the races, would seem to have been concluded by fiat of the federal courts. Now that this has become true, the resultant complex of problems is ominous. Some of these problems are of prior existence, but are now aggravated by the imposition of racial desegregation under the guise of social reform and human rights. [27]

This commentary on school desegregation made by a local historian in 1974 well conveys the attitude of many, if not most people, in the dominant community of EBRP. Among other things, it reflects the fact that the whole concept of public schools developed late in Louisiana. Prior to the Civil War there were no organized public school systems in the state. There was, in fact, a prevalent dislike of the notion of public education making it impossible to obtain the funding necessary to pay for these institutions.

The Louisiana Constitution of 1812, for example, contained no provision at all for education. The Legislature of 1812, however, did create a crude public school machinery. But still no statewide school law was enacted until 1847. Even so, the positions of the parish school superintendents were abolished in 1852. The legislators considered their salaries of $300 a year a needless extravagance.

After the war the Reconstruction Administration drew up, on paper, an elaborate free school system. There was to have been one free public school in every parish. No separate schools were going to be established exclusively for any one race. Given the attitude of most white people in this era, this edict was perceived as amounting to excluding their children from the public schools. The schools never opened, in any case, because the public school funds were embezzled. The grand plan for free public education was not implemented. [28]

Nevertheless,

> In 1867 the first public school was built in Baton Rouge. Prior to this, education had been in private schools and by tutors. The 'free school' was called the St. Louis School and stood on Courthouse Square. This was followed by others. [29]

Baton Rouge was certainly a pioneer in Louisiana because even by 1890 only five parishes in the entire state had authorized public school systems. However, by 1907 all of the parishes except nine maintained rudimentary public schools. Consolidation had begun in 1903 and it grew until there were 103 "transfer wagons" (the original school buses) operating by 1907. Readers must understand, of course, that there were separate schools for black and white children. 'Busing' wasn't being carried out to make good educational opportunities available to African Americans. It functioned in order to bring white students to better equipped consolidated schools where they could obtain a decent education. Parents weren't complaining about their children being bussed for this purpose. [30]

Ten causal factors have been identified by Von Brock to explain the relative retardation of public education in Louisiana during the nineteenth century.

1. Low priority in most people's value systems.
2. Heavy dependence on parochial schools and private tutors.
3. The disruption of the Civil War and Reconstruction Period.
4. The large Negro population and fear of forced integration until Plessy v. Ferguson in 1896.
5. The emphasis most people placed on securing the basic necessities of life.
6. A belief that the public schools were primarily for the children of the poor.
7. A belief that formal schooling really wasn't necessary for rural children.
8. The lack of suitable enabling legislation at the state-level.
9. A lack of educational leadership at the state and local levels.
10. A relatively sparce population, tending to be isolated in small ethnic groups, with little means of communication and poor transportation facilities. [31]

According to Hilton, Shipp and Gremillion, there were thirteen, "retarding factors in the development of a first-class system of public education in Louisiana." Five of them concern racial and socio-economic issues.

1. The low level of public education in the scheme of values of many citizens.
2. The large slave population prior to 1860 and the large Negro population since that time.
3. The War between the States and Reconstruction.
4. Fear of forced integration of the races in the schools until after the Plessy v. Ferguson decision in 1896 - the so-called 'separate but equal' ruling.
5. The high level of support of welfare benefits to the citizens of Louisiana during the past two decades (1945-1965). [32]

Reflecting on these possible reasons for the slow development of public schooling in Louisiana may provide us with some useful insights regarding the grounds for people's attitudes toward school desegregation in EBRP during the last forty years. Perceptions of legitimate civil rights have been influenced by the earlier system of slavery within a plantation economy. Efforts to achieve social justice in schooling for blacks are all too often linked with the bad experiences of the Reconstruction Era from 1862 to 1877. This was a period that white Louisianians characterize as a time of armed occupation, political exploitation, and legalized looting. These images with which current school desegregation may be linked do little to make it more palatable to many white citizens today.

Stemming from this dominant outlook, in 1974 Cline listed five dilemmas that he called "a complex of problems."

1. Racial hostilities, always latent, that rise quickly to the surface.
2. A lack of parallels in educational history from which lessons might be drawn.
3. Academic achievement being more difficult of attainment.
4. Standards tend to be lowered.
5. The need for the utmost intelligence, patience, and integrity from all who support and guide the educational enterprise. [33]

The fact is that separate schools for the races had not been mandated in the Louisiana State Constitution of 1879. This matter was left up to the local school boards, which proceeded to establish dual systems. Not only were the black and white schools completely separate, but after professional organizations and collective bargaining became common, the black and white teachers belonged to their own segregated groups. Ineffective compulsory attendance laws had been enacted, but it wasn't until near the end of World War II in 1944 that Act No. 239, an attendance law that worked, was passed and implemented. Before that time many black children simply dropped out of school and received virtually no formal education. The new law required a school year of 180 days, an on-going census of school-aged children, and visiting teachers to contact and instruct absentees. A new compulsory attendance law, Act No. 139, was passed in 1964, which further strengthened these regulations. [34]

At this same time, 1964, however, a decade after the Supreme Court's Brown v. Board of Education decision, Louisiana still had solidly segregated public schools. The grand total in the state was 1,442 public schools; 510 black and 932 white. There were at that time 318 black elementary and 484 white elementary schools operating. Additionally there were twenty-seven either elementary schools with junior highs or junior high schools for black, and ninety-six for white students. One hundred twenty-two kindergarten through twelfth grade schools were for blacks and 261 for whites. There were nineteen black and thirty-one combination elementary - junior - senior high schools. Only twenty-four black and sixty white institutions in Louisiana were solely senior high schools. As this mixed picture suggests, public schooling in Louisiana was often of poor quality - especially for black students who often lacked access to secondary and vocational institutions. [35]

Despite this situation that prevailed in 1964, when discussing racial desegregation in public higher education in Louisiana a decade later Cline asserts that:

> Practically entirely it can be said that racial desegregation characterizes the public institutions of higher learning in Louisiana. Qualified students, without regard to race, creed, color, or national origin are admissible to any and all of the state-supported colleges and universities. The fact that Southern University and Grambling University are predominantly black as to student enrollment would seem to indicate that many of the black prefer these institutions rather than nearby "white" institutions which they might otherwise attend. [36]

The federal authorities in the Office of Education, Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW) at the time certainly didn't concur with Cline's assessment. They were threatening to withhold millions of dollars in federal higher education funds that otherwise would have come to the state in 1973 and 1974. This intervention was based on their evaluation that higher education in Louisiana still was not in compliance with the federal guidelines. Part of the problem was the inequities in pre-school, elementary, and secondary education for black students. They were handicapped in their ability to become academically qualified for higher education admission.

These conditions were not happenstancial. They were the results of determined policy. McCall, the author of a doctoral dissertation on School Desegregation in Louisiana in 1973, begins his abstract saying:

> This dissertation deals primarily with efforts by the State of Louisiana and its political subdivisions to avoid compliance with the Supreme Court's decision on school desegregation. As a major element in its strategy, Louisiana embarked upon a policy of "massive legislation and litigation." From 1954 to 1964 the Louisiana Legislature passed at least 135 statutes and resolutions aimed at maintaining legalized discrimination based on race. Legislation that was challenged in federal courts was declared invalid largely because of conflict with the equal protection and due process clauses of the Fourteenth Amendment. [37]

It isn't feasible at this point to review the whole history of educational race relations in Louisiana since 1954, but in order to comprehend the context within which the school officials in EBRP were working forty years ago wemust focus on several events. After the Brown decision in 1954, for example, an amendment to the Louisiana State Constitution was drafted. It was submitted for approval by the voters in the general election of November, 1954. By a vote of 217,992 to 46,929 a stipulation that there were to be separate schools for all black and white students in Louisiana was approved There were, in fact, to be criminal penalties for anyone who violated the amendment.

By 1958 the legislators were examining a proposal to make tuition grants from the state treasury to students who were attending private, non-sectarian schools. Most of these had been opened in order to maintain racial segregation. This statute was also approved by the voters 151,929 to 55,408. Thus, the notion of "school choice" as a

means of subverting integration efforts was actually promulgated by the politicians. It should not, therefore, be too surprising that, even after the "voucher plan" was invalidated, transfer from the public to independent schools has been a factor in the EBRP school desegregation case. [38]

It was on January 22, 1962 that the desegregation controversy came to a head. An attorney representing the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) on that day filed a motion in the U.S. Eastern District Court of Louisiana. It asked that the Court direct that plans be drawn for desegregating the public schools of East Baton Rouge and St. Helena Parishes. The plaintiffs pointed out that the EBRP Board of Education had failed to do anything to comply with the order of Judge Wright in May, 1960 to desegregate their schools "with all deliberate speed." A plan with five provisions was advocated by the NAACP attorneys in 1962.

1. School assignment on a non-racial basis.
2. Allotment of funds on a non-racial basis.
3. Construction of schools on a non-discriminatory basis.
4. Approval of budgets on a non-racial basis.
5. Elimination of discrimination in the operation of the school system or curricula based on race. [39]

According to an article in Southern School News, February, 1962, Federal Judge E. Gordon West took the plaintiff claims under advisement, but indicated that he didn't intend to make a ruling in the East Baton Rouge public schools matter until after the start of the 1964-1965 school year. The judge later asserted that by allowing this cooling-off period, violence had been avoided in the EBRP schools. By 1964, however, school desegregation had begun in EBRP. [40]

We know who was providing the leadership that the EBRP African American community needed in order to fight school segregation in the courts.

> Murphy W. Bell, born and educated in Baton Rouge, has been a leading black attorney since he was admitted to the Louisiana State Bar. Perhaps he is best known for his role as counsel in various civil rights cases from 1960 to the present time. Serving as lead attorney, he has handled desegregation cases against various Louisiana parish school boards . . . Also Southern University demonstrations and cases involving the NAACP and Black Muslims. [41]

Clarence Marie Collier, in an oral history, recalls being elected President of the (black) Louisiana Education Association in 1955. LEA joined the NAACP in filing the court suits that brought about school desegregation. Collier reminisces that,

> . . . the legislators . . . basically they were just closed. There were no positive attitudes. That's a very frustrating feeling. So we recognized that the only course of action which we had was through the courts. . . . but you had to strip your (LEA) budget in order to provide legal services . . . for teachers and children. [42]

The school desegregation struggle in EBRP was going on in a very inflamatory climate. One commentator writing in 1967 said,

> In Louisiana, courts have ordered them (educators) to desegregate the public schools, and school boards have ordered them to maintain the dual system. Those who tried to comply with the court order faced personal threats and intimidation. They received obscene phone calls, theatening letters, and remarks about them and their families made in public. They faced real personal problems. Who should be assigned to which schools? The question in 1964, however, wasn't 'will we?,' but 'how will we?' [43]

In the metropolis located nearby Baton Rouge, Federal Judge J. Skelly Wright had ordered that for September, 1960 all New Orleans children be able to attend the public school nearest their home regardless of its previous racial designation. The Orleans Parish Board on April 22, 1960, rather than complying, decided to poll the parents regarding two courses of action.

1. I would like to see the schools kept open even though a small amount of integration is necessary.
2. I would like to see the schools closed rather than be integrated even in small amounts.

The parental responses in this neighboring city came to sixty-four percent of the constituency. The white parents voted 12,229 to 2,707 favoring closing the public schools. Black parents voted 11,407 to 679 for desegregated schools. The board then announced that it would abide by the wishes of the majority of white parents. This, of course, led to new rounds of litigation and race riots in New Orleans. [44]

As public school desegregation finally got underway in EBRP eyewitness accounts communicate the difficulties that were encountered. Eva Legard, currently the President of the EBRP School Board,said this in an oral history interview.

> Once we saw the things that were happening and how the politicians were doing, not coming back to the community, we just felt that they were not serving in our best interest. So that's how I got involved. Plus, when we had this incident at Southern University, where the students - you know, when the children were killed - I started meeting at the churches at night with them and trying to talk to them and help them. . . .
>
> (On the day the students were killed) I was at work. But I wasn't out on the grounds. I knew the young men - well, one of them, Denver Smith. I knew his mother very, very well because she was a friend of mine. And my son, I had a son in that. He is ill now because of that, because he was on the front line and he saw them killed. . . . [45]

Baton Rouge experienced the terror of a deadly race riot in 1972. As one of a series of "Looking Back" articles in the local newspaper, a journalist reviewed a twenty year old newsfilm this winter. He describes the riot scene as:

> . . . a line of defiant, bow tied black Muslims . . . arm to arm and crowds huddled on the edge of the rain-soaked asphalt along with a small group of police and deputies. The scene suddenly erupts as both sides collide into a knot of violent motion. In the next scene, people are lying in the street. A few minutes later ambulances show up - later, a hearse.
>
> Two deputies and two Muslims were killed, a television newsman was beaten into permanent disability, a police sergeant was permanently deprived of the use of his left arm - and three others were injured. There are two stories of how the fight started. Some say the Muslims made the first move, others say police swung first. A judge sentenced nine Muslims to twenty-one year prison terms. . . . But the event shook the lid off the simmering racial hostility in Baton Rouge. [46]

There were extensive repercussions of the riot. The North Boulevard neighborhood where it occurred never really recovered. The Temple Building in front of which the fighting took place stands derelict today. "The riot closed it down." Seven hundred National Guard troops were trucked into Baton Rouge. A curfew was imposed by the Mayor. Racially motivated incidents were reported in the public schools. Even the LSU-Alabama basketball game - in this strongly sports-minded town - had to be postponed because of the "racial distrubances in the city and the curfew." The memory of this tragic incident is still a very sensitive matter in EBRP. The Black Muslims were from out-of-state so the police consider them to have been inflamatory interlopers. From the Muslim perspective, "The white devils were the cause of all the problems," says a police officer. However one perceives it, the riot had a major impact on school desegregation in EBRP. [47]

Yet another manifestation of the changing situation was a major strike by EBRP public school teachers in March, 1979. By now their unions were integrated. Denied a favorable contract, they walked the picket line for eleven school days seeking a new collective bargaining agreement with the Parish School Board. According to one historian, 2,800 out of a total of 3,600 teachers - based on teacher organization estimates - took part in the job action. For the first time the teachers were militant. Non-striking school personnel and some volunteer parents kept the schools open. But this is a landmark example of increasing teacher activism and their growing disenchantment with pay scales that were (and still are) very low even for a southern school system. [48]

Commentaries on the actual experience of desegregating the EBRP school system come from several sources. White educators declare that:

> Desegregation marked a total change in discipline and handling discipline cases. Of course, today things are much better. Black and white children walking with their arms around one another would have been unheard of in 'sixty-nine.
>
> I have been accused of being a racist by black parents and accused of catering to the blacks by white parents. I try to be fair in all cases. [49]

A black mother, Clara Mae Wells, recalls,

> They arrested my daughter without contacting me. I still haven't understood how they arrested her with all the scars on her. What school was it? Baton Rouge High. . . . When I went (into the police station), they were sitting around with their guns and their clubs all over the place, and I started asking questions. And one said, 'Well, we arrested her because she hit a teacher.' I said, 'Why didn't you arrest the teacher too?' I said, 'What about those scars on her? . . . This white woman had taken hunks of her skin out and you going to say to her that she was supposed to stand there and let her peel her?' I said, 'Uh-uh, we are going to do better than this.' [50]

Wells goes on to recount that there was a formal hearing of her daughter's case at which the girl was suspended from school. The teacher wasn't even reprimanded. At that point the mother wrote a three page protest for the local newspaper. The A. Philip Randolph Institute then called on her to be a speaker. She began addressing audiences around the city in churches and schools, wherever a group could be gathered. Wells recalls that at that time the news reporters always referred to her according to the color of her clothing, but never used her name. She believes that this was because she was challenging discrimination at school. Wells also called attention to the way of life in the local (housing) projects, which she believes hurt many African American children. She argues that the policies that offer them food stamps, free medical care, and welfare are robbing poor people of any incentive to better themselves.

A report issued back in 1958 by the EBRP School Board details new construction that it was claimed was designed to strengthen the entire parish school system, " . . . so that the needs will be met and everyone concerned will have reason to be proud." At that time thirteen new schools had been constructed since World War II. There were also many additions and renovations to existing buildings. Three "sub-standard" buildings had been abandoned and the Convention Street School demolished due to highway construction. A one mill property tax increment for construction as well as another mill for school maintenance had been approved. EBRP also had a forty-six and a half million dollar bond issue for school additions and renovations at this time. The problem with all of these improvements was that they were being carried out within a tenaciously racially segregated public school system. The underlying message comes through on the final page of the report. Four years after Brown v. Board of Education, EBRP had "forty-three white schools, twenty-two Negro schools, (and) four schools under construction." Twenty years later, despite all of the clamor and litigation, the defacto situation in Baton Rouge had not greatly changed. [51]

According to an EBRP author writing in 1981,

> Area schoolchildren attend more than 100 public schools, several parochial schools maintained by four religious denominations, and six non-sectarian private institutions. Among the larger public high schools are Istrouma, Robert E. Lee, Tara, Belaire, Glen Oaks, McKinley, Capitol, and Scotlandville. Baton Rouge has retained more than vestiges of a segregated public school system over the years - McKinley, Capitol, and Scotlandville are overwhelmingly black - and a desegregation suit more than a quarter century old is finally heading for a decision in the local federal district court of Judge John Parker. [52]

As recently as last November, after a candidate for Governor, white-supremist David Duke, won fifty-five percent of the state-wide white vote (although he wasn't elected), black citizens voiced their concerns. The Rev. Charles Smith, Pastor of Shiloh Baptist Church for twenty-nine years, said,

> I think race relations have definitely improved between white and black in my lifetime. . . . But we can't overlook the fact that there is still a large segment of whites in this community who seem intent on turning the clock back. . . . It's no longer considered a disgrace by a large segment of the population to express racist opinions and racist attitudes.

Baton Rouge NAACP attorney Robert Williams commented,

> It's coming home that if you're black, particularly if you're male and black, you'll have to face racism from the day you're born until the day you die. But you just have to grow tough skin about it . . . It's a fact of life. You resist it, but it's there. An eighteen-year-old believed this couldn't happen, . . . it's a failure of our ability to communicate to young people that this is a real fact. [53]

It is at the point of time six years after 1981 as earlier described by Carleton, that our 1987-1992 in-depth case studies will commence in the second and third chapters. Currently, according to

the City Directory, EBRP has about 160 schools, including more than thirty parochial and private institutions. There are, altogether, 91,190 students being schooled from kindergarten through high school according to this source. Almost 60,000 attend the public schools, so there is a one-third sectarian/independent school to two-thirds public school ratio in EBRP. Let's examine how public school desegregation and redesign having been working since 1987 in this context. [54]

CHAPTER ONE

NOTES

1 Larry Cuban, "Managing Dilemmas While Building Professional Communities," AERA Presidential Address, April, 1991, Educational Researcher 21(1), January-February, 1992, p. 6.

2 Ibid. The concepts that Cuban is articulating were set forth in A. and H. Berlak, Dilemmas of Schooling. London, England, U.K.: Methuen, 1981 and other sources to which he refers. The term, satisfice, was coined by Herbert Simon in Models of Man. New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1957. It conveys the notion that in order to obtain a degree of satisfaction in a negotiated arrangement we must be willing to sacrifice to some extent.

3 Evelyn Martindale Thom, Baton Rouge Story. An Historical Sketch of Louisiana's Capital City. Baton Rouge, LA: The Baton Rouge Foundation for Historical Louisiana, Inc., 1967, p. 37.

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5 Rose Meyers, A History of Baton Rouge, 1699-1812. The Baton Rouge Bicentennial Corporation. Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1976, pp. 2-7.

6 Ibid., p. 10.

7 Ibid., pp. 18-20.

8 Ibid., pp. 25-27.

9 Ibid., pp. 31, 51, 67. The population figure is from E.A. Davis, Louisiana: A Narrative History, p. 142.

10 Ibid., pp. 68-75, 96, 116.

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12 Folklife in the Florida Parishes. Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana Division of the Arts, Office of Cultural Development, Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism, 1989, p. 15 f.

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24 Robert C. Von Brock, "Public Education in Urban Louisiana," in Winston W. Riddick, Louisiana Urban Affairs. Baton Rouge, LA: Institute of Government Research, Louisiana State University, 1967, p. 246.

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Chapter Two

A History of the Redesign Plan, 1987-1992

The era of public school policy on which this inquiry is focused began five years ago when the EBRP School Board hired a new Superintendent of Schools. A native of Cleveland, Ohio, all of this individual's previous experience as an educator had been north of the Mason-Dixon Line. Bernard Joseph Weiss was born on June 4, 1924, so he was sixty-three years old when he arrived in Baton Rouge. His higher education was all received at Wayne State University, Detroit, MI, where he earned an Ed.D. degree in 1962.

Weiss' biographical sketch notes that he has long been particularly interested in applied linguistics. He studied the relationships between English and French, a topic that must have been a relevant qualification for the new position in Louisiana. During his long career, Weiss has been a supervising teacher in inner city Detroit, and an editor of education-related materials at Harper and Row for three years. He was an Assistant Superintendent of the Milwaukee Public Schools for five years, and Superintendent at Englewood, N.J. and Sandusky, OH. Weiss therefore came to EBRP with an impressive professional background. [1]

One of my informants mentioned that Weiss' being Jewish was considered an advantage, causing him to be perceived as being neutral in the tense EBRP religious milieu. Also, the new position would bring Weiss up to retirement age. Somewhat like Pope John XXIII, he seems to have been chosen for this highly controversial job because his supporters believed that he was likely to bring sagacity and circumspection to it. Rather in parallel to the impact of Pope John XXIII and the Vatican II Council, we will argue that Bernard J. Weiss has succeeded in significantly restructuring the EBRP school system. It is less evident, however, that much additional school desegregation has taken place during his administration.

This case study of educational policy formation and implementation in the EBRP school system is based on official school board documents, a Panasonic Foundation report, and local newspaper articles and editorials, 1989-1992. The new approach to schooling was promulgated in a twenty page booklet called At the Crossroads, first issued on March 11, 1988. The flavor of this position paper is communicated by slogans printed on the cover. A link with the educational futuristics movement is forged by the motto, "Into the Next Century." There is also

ILLUSTRATION ONE

A modern replica of the "red stick" for which Baton Rouge is named that marked the boundary of Indian lands. It is located near the Southern University campus on the bluff overlooking the Mississippi River. The monument commemorates the cultural diversity of Baton Rouge.

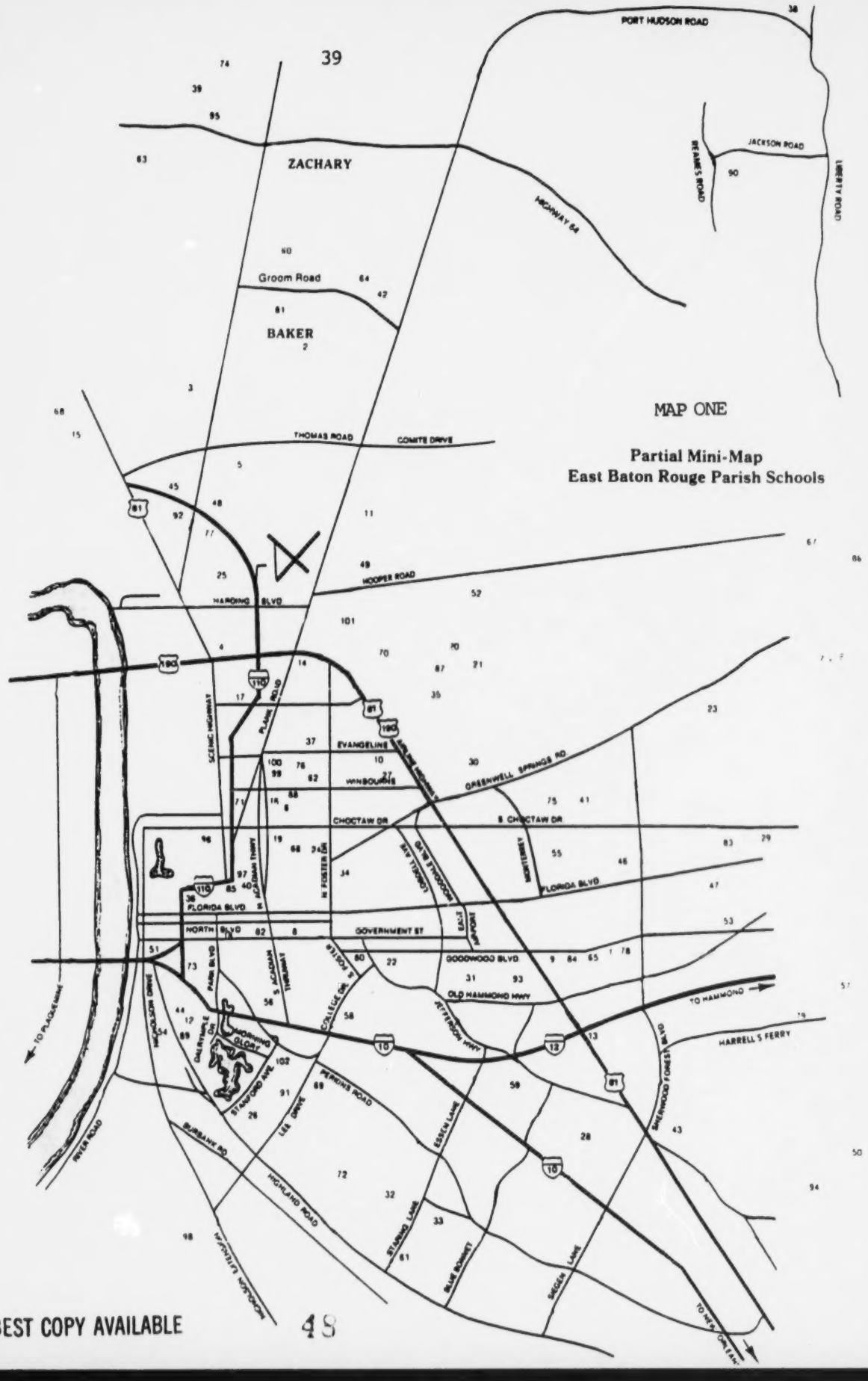
an arrow-like device labeled "East Baton Rouge Parish School System" plunging into what appears to be a "golden fleece" lying on a grid. The "fleece" is identified as "Year 2000." Also printed on the cover of this material is another slogan, "A Model for America." This indicates that, at least in 1988, the Baton Rouge planners believed that their redesign efforts would address not only local issues, but solve national ones as well.[2]

A subsequent release from the school board details their perspective of how the Redesign Plan was worked out.

> In the fall of 1987, Superintendent Bernard Weiss set up a twenty-four member Blue Ribbon Committee to come up with ways to improve the school system, while at the same time improving the racial balance in the system.
>
> After months of meetings, the committee came up with the School Redesign Plan, which combined site-based management with educational enhancements aimed at attracting other race students to schools whose racial balances were not reflective of the school system as a whole. That plan called for a five-year phase-in of the program, with twelve schools taking part the first year.
>
> The proposal went to Federal Judge John Parker, the NAACP, and the U.S. Justice Department in April of 1988, and was approved for implementation in May. [3]

Statements of rationale are encountered in <u>At the Crossroads</u> that articulate the reasoning underlying the redesign plan. Weiss, in his "Superintendent's Reflections," for example, asserts that,

> Despite a complaint that was filed regarding desegregation over thirty years ago and despite a court order filed approximately eight years ago, unitary status has not been achieved in the East Baton Rouge Parish Schools. The instability resulting from the litigation has not only been costly, it has also been erosive in terms of making wise use of dollars for instructional purposes. Racial concerns relating to equity continue to be matters requiring attention.



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THE EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH SCHOOL SYSTEM

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

NO.	SCHOOL	ADDRESS	PHONE
1	Audubon Elementary	10720 Goodwood Blvd.	272-2620
2	Baker Heights Elementary	2580 South Street, Baker	775-0550
3	Bakerfield Elementary	3750 Harding Street, Baker	775-1493
4	Banks Elementary	2401 72nd Ave.	357-3371
5	Beechwood Elementary	2586 DeSoto Drive	775-0776
6	Belfair Visual/Performing Arts Extended Day Academy	4481 Fairfields Avenue	356-6191
7	Bellingrath Hills Elementary	9812 Audubon Drive, Greenwell Springs	261-4093
8	Bernard Terrace Elementary	241 Edison Avenue	343-5769
9	Broadmoor Elementary	9650 Goodwood Blvd.	926-0343
10	Brookstown Elementary	4375 East Brookstown Dr.	355-0382
11	Brownfields Elementary	11616 Ellen Drive	775-3527
12	Buchanan Elementary	1222 E. Buchanan Street	343-4585
13	Cedarcrest-Southmoor Elementary	10187 Twin Cedars Street	293-9950
14	Claiborne Elementary	4700 Denham Street	357-9712
15	Crestworth Elementary	11200 Avenue F	778-1317
16	Dalton Accelerated Elementary	3808 Ontario Street	355-2398
17	Delmont Elementary	5300 Douglas Avenue	355-2106
18	Dufrocq Elementary	330 South 19th Street	343-6323
19	Eden Park Elementary	1650 N. Acadian Thruway East	343-9364
20	Forest Heights Elementary	7447 Sumrall Drive	358-5681
21	Glen Oaks Park Elementary	5656 Lanier Drive	356-4521
22	Goodwood Elementary	6550 Sevenoaks Avenue	927-0342
23	Greenbrier Elementary	12303 Canterbury Drive	275-4260
24	Greenville Elementary	1845 North Foster Drive	357-0139
25	Harding Elementary	8600 Elm Grove Garden Drive	775-4267
26	Highland Elementary	250 Sunset Boulevard	766-1272
27	Howell Park Elementary	6125 Winbourne Ave.	356-0104
28	Jefferson Terrace Elementary	9922 Cal Road	293-3210
29	La Belle Aire Elementary	12255 Tams Drive	275-7480
30	Lanier Elementary	4706 Lainer Drive	357-5953
31	LaSalle Elementary	8000 LaSalle Avenue	927-6130
32	Magnolia Woods Elementary	760 Maxine Drive	769-6845
33	Mayfair Elementary	9680 Hyacinth Ave.	766-4377
34	Melrose Elementary	1348 Valcour Drive	926-2353
35	Merrydale Elementary	8700 Rio	355-0346
36	Nicholson Elementary	1143 North Street	387-3676
37	North Highlands Elementary	3875 Byron Street	357-5913
38	Northeast Elementary	Port Hudson Road, Pride	654-5113
39	Northwestern Elementary	Rollins & Pope Road, Zachary	654-2786
40	Park Elementary	2700 Fuqua	344-2145
41	Park Forest Elementary	10717 Elaine Drive	272-0814
42	Park Ridge Elementary	5908 Groom Road, Baker	775-5924
43	Parkview Elementary	5680 Parkforest Drive	753-5615
44	Polk Elementary	408 East Polk Street	383-2811
45	Progress Elementary	858 Progress Rd.	775-4986
46	Red Oaks Elementary	10755 Cletus Drive	272-2036
47	Riveroaks Elementary	960 Fountainebleau Drive	275-4600
48	Ryan Elementary	10337 Elm Grove Garden Drive	775-2407
49	Sharon Hills Elementary	6450 Guynell Drive	358-6522
50	Shenandoah Elementary	16556 Appomattox Avenue	753-3560
51	South Boulevard Elementary	802 Mayflower Street	343-6630
52	Tanglewood Elementary	9382 Rustling Oaks Drive	261-3454
53	Twin Oaks Elementary	819 Trammel Drive	275-6620
54	University Terrace Elementary	578 West Roosevelt Street	387-2328
55	Villa del Rey Elementary	9765 Cuyhanga Drive	924-1606
56	Walnut Hills Elementary	2040 South Acadian Thruway	344-0084
57	Wedgewood Elementary	2330 Aspenwood Avenue	753-7301
58	Westdale Elementary	2000 College Drive	926-5421
59	Westminster Elementary	8938 Westminster Drive	927-2930
60	White Hills Elementary	5300 Bentley Drive, Baker	775-5891
61	Wildwood Elementary	444 Halfway Tree Road	766-6002
62	Winbourne Elementary	4501 Winbourne Avenue	355-4446
63	Zachary Elementary	3775 Hemlock Street, Zachary	654-4036

MIDDLE SCHOOLS

NO.	SCHOOL	ADDRESS	PHONE
64	Baker Middle	5903 Groom Road, Baker	775-9750
65	Broadmoor Middle	1228 Sharp Road	272-0540
66	Capitol Middle	4200 Gus Young Avenue	344-7956
67	Central Middle	11526 Sullivan Road	261-2237
68	Crestworth Middle	10650 Avenue F	775-6645
69	Glasgow Middle	1676 Glasgow Avenue	925-2942
70	Glen Oaks Middle	5300 Monarch Street	357-3790
71	Istrouma Middle Magnet	2800 Erie Street	357-6484
72	Kenilworth Middle	7800 Boone Drive	766-8111
73	McKinley Middle Magnet	1557 McCalop Street	355-0089
74	Northwestern Middle	8200 East Central Avenue, Zachary	654-9201
75	Park Forest Middle	3795 Aletha Drive	275-6650
76	Prescott Middle	4065 Prescott Road	357-6481
77	Scotlandville Middle	9147 Elm Grove Garden Drive	775-1688
78	Sherwood Middle	1020 Marlbrook Drive	272-3090
79	Southeast Middle	15000 South Harrell's Ferry	293-5830
80	Westdale Middle Academy	5650 Clayrut Road	924-1308

HIGH SCHOOLS

NO.	SCHOOL	ADDRESS	PHONE
81	Baker High	3200 Groom Road, Baker	775-1259
82	Baton Rouge High Magnet	2825 Government Street	383-0520
83	Belaire High	12121 Tams Drive	272-1860
84	Broadmoor High	10100 Goodwood Boulevard	926-1420
85	Capitol High	1000 North 23rd Street	383-0353
86	Central High	10200 East Brookside Drive	261-3438
87	Glen Oaks High	6650 Cedar Grove Drive	358-4306
88	Istrouma High and Technology Academy	3730 Winbourne Avenue	355-7701
89	McKinley High	800 East McKinley Street	344-7096
90	Northeast High	12825 Jackson Road	654-5808
91	Robert E. Lee High	1105 Lee Drive	383-7744
92	Scotlandville High Magnet	9870 Scotland Avenue	775-3715
93	Tara High	9002 Whitehall Avenue	927-6100
94	Windlawn	14939 Tiger Bend Road	753-1200
95	Zachary High	4101 Church Street, Zachary	654-2776
96	Northdale Academy	1555 Madison Avenue	383-1812
97	Capitol Preparatory Institute	2550 Began Walk	346-8598

CENTERS

98	Arlington Center	931 Dean Lee Drive	766-8188
99	Baton Rouge Preparatory Academy	5958 Cadillac Street	356-0256
100	Mohican Center	4050 Tunica Street	356-6691
101	Wilma C. Montgomery Center	4070 Tunica Street	355-0388
102	Southdowns Center	2050 Hood Avenue	346-1127

49

> While building on the best of the past, it seems desireable to place emphasis on increasing community participation in the daily activities of the schools. Additionally, it is important to make each school the focus of activities rather than to assume that the more traditional mode reflecting central office control is a viable approach. . . . School-based management is not a panacea, but it is one way of improving community participation and dealing with better use of limited resources.

The Superintendent goes on to recognize that in 1988 Louisiana was undergoing a state fiscal crisis. He therefore recognizes that most of the resources needed in order to implement the school redesign plan will " . . . have to come essentially from the parish." He then advocates that,

> Theories and rhetoric must give way to action plans and accountability. Continuing audits of all school activities at the local level will provide assurance not only that the process has integrity, but also that continuing success can be assured. The luxury of using money where it does not count cannot be supported; the impact of all resources should focus on the classroom. [4]

The logic advanced by the authors of At the Crossroads is congruent with Weiss' position. They write:

> The movement toward site-based management assumes that schools have different needs and, therefore, require unique responses to their unique needs. It also assumes that all people close to the school - teachers, parents, students, administrators and community - are in a special position to recognize needs and plan responses. Working cooperatively, these groups will plan and work together for what is best for our students. [5]

An examination of At the Crossroads indicates that a five year, eight step process was being recommended. The committee envisioned an " . . . overall site-based management accountability and feedback system." It featured these eight phases.

SCHOOL REDESIGN THROUGH
SITE-BASED MANAGEMENT

Step 1: School Needs Assessment

Step 2: School Action Plan

Step 3: School Annual Self Study

Step 4: School Self Evaluation Report

Step 5: External Audit Team Report

Step 6: A. Superintendent Exemplary Status Recommendation
or
B. Superintendent Intervention Report

C. Re-audit Team Report

Step 7: Oversight Committee Report

Step 8: School Board Exemplary Status Approval [6]

The public of EBRP was promised that:

> The site-based management effort will make a difference for our students. The effort will get East Baton Rouge Parish schools in compliance with the Desegregation Court Order, pupil and teacher absenteeism will go down, test scores will go up, vandalism will go down, community support will go up, drop outs, suspensions, and expulsions will go down, morale of teachers will go up and overall accountability will be improved. [7]

Perhaps it was naive of the school redesigners to ever claim that these eight desireable outcomes could all be achieved by instituting one major policy change - site-based management. As we will discover, unfortunately, these aims were certainly not totally attained. On the other hand, considerable progress has been made during the first five years of the redesign plan in the EBRP School System.

The School Restructuring Ideology

A copy of Panasonic Foundation, 1984-1990 was quietly handed to me, along with other items concerning the EBRP school redesign program, by one of my informants. When I examined it, I realized that much of the local school redesign approach had been influenced by the Panasonic Foundation's rationale. The "Executive Director's Letter," for example, puts forward these concepts, achieved after trying to bring about change by funding more than fifty local school projects over a ten month period. The Executive Director concludes that,

> Any changes brought about were mostly ephemeral. . . . What was needed was a fundamental reexamination of our entire system of education and a restructuring of the way schools and school systems conduct their business. [8]

The Panasonic Foundation (PF) therefore instituted a new network of long term partnerships with teachers and administrators in reform-minded school systems, beginning in 1987. The PF's role is perceived to be that of a catalyst, enabler, and facilitator. The Executive Director points out that although partnership schools and districts, including EBRP, have implemented restructuring plans, the most difficult work lies ahead.

> How do we keep those who have already devoted three years to this effort from becoming burned out in body, mind, and spirit? How do we satisfy the demands of those who, while understanding that meaningful change requires time, nevertheless want to see results now? How do we convince those whom experience has taught 'this too shall pass' that this reform can not and shall not? How do we institutionalize the culture of ongoing reform, such that a change in the leadership of a state department of education, a district, or a school does not disrupt or derail the entire process? [9]

The PF leaders chose to concentrate most of their resources on public school improvement partnerships. Previously, their initial programs recognized three grantmaking areas: (1) improving student learning, (2) improving teaching and teachers' working conditions, and (3) increased community participation in school improvement. Roadblocks, however, were quickly encountered.

> We learned that the rules and regulations governing schools are so detailed and far reaching that they stifle teacher and student imagination and creativeness. We learned that teachers and building administrators seldom have any say about the most important and the most basic aspects of their school, such as the curriculum, schedules, materials, and personnel. [10]

These conclusions were not arrived at entirely independently. The PF's direction was being influenced by the research findings of other organizations. Among them are:

The Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy

Central Park East Schools in New York City
(Deborah Meier)

The Coalition of Essential Schools
(Theodore Sizer)

Education Development Center, Inc., Rochester, N.Y.

Jefferson County, KY, Public Schools
(Phillip Schlechty)

The first PF partnerships with urban school districts were established in 1987. Nine school systems are involved: Allentown, PA; Dade County Public Schools, FL; East Baton Rouge Parish School System, LA; Englewood, N.J.; Mineapolis, MN; Rochester, N.Y.; San Diego, CA; Santa Fe, N.M.; and Seattle, WA. The Minnesota and New Mexico state education departments are also part of the PF partnerships network. The key principle of this movement is to improve student learning - for each student and all students - in these urban school districts that serve large proportions of disadvantaged youth. The partner school systems must be led by people who:

> . . . share our belief in school-based, bottom-up reform, with the people inside the schools as the planners and implementers of reform. As districts, our partners also had to be prepared to:
>
> # support radical change and encourage risk-taking in schools,
>
> # reallocate central resources, both human and financial to the schools,
>
> # redefine their relationships to schools so as to become active supporters for,

and facilitators of, school-based reform,

commit to systemic, school-based school reform as an ongoing way of life. [12]

According to the PF authorities, the Foundation helps its partners enhance their capability to conceive, plan, and implement their own school reforms. PF provides expert technical assistance, seminars for school personnel on topics such as educational vision, mission, and organization;staffing, curricula, scheduling, grouping for instruction, team-planning, interdisciplinary teaching, parental involvement, school-site budgeting, and appropriate student assessment. Field visits to exemplary sites are arranged. PF, however, claims that it doesn't endorse any single model or advocate one preferred approach to changing the schools. The Foundation, rather, exists to "stimulate and provoke creative thinking, increase knowledge and understanding, and nurture the development of local ideas." [13]

Two photographs provided by the EBRP School System are used in the PF booklet. One's a photograph showing two black and two white boys engaged in computer mediated instruction. There is another photograph of Superintendent Bernard Weiss in the midst of a racially integrated group of a dozen EBRP students. Ten in that picture are black; two are white. Beneath it is a quotation from Weiss, "I must confess that I have not witnessed anywhere the kind of ebullience and predisposition for change manifested in this community." [14]

There are several other interracial photographs in the PF booklet. The issue of public school desegregation, however, is never directly verbalized. The PF writers assert that there must be no invidious comparisons among schools, producing "winners" and "losers." Perhaps this is meant to be a veiled reference to the effects of racial discrimination and inequities. Although they have little to say directly about school desegregation, the PF writers do refer to some preliminary evidence that in the restructured schools in Partnership districts:

1. Students are earning higher grades.
2. Fewer students are being held back at grade level.
3. Student attendence is up.
4. Student discipline problems are down.
5. Test scores have improved. [15]

The similarities between this list of claimed achievements and those envisioned by the EBRP Blue Ribbon Committee are sufficient to make it likely that the local planners were influenced by PF. So far

as can be discerned from this document, however, the PF impact on the EBRP School System must have been primarily conceptual. Among the sixty-nine grants made by PF for pre-collegiate education between 1985 and 1990 no direct major funding for Baton Rouge is listed. But from 1987 through 1990 PF expended a total of $1,770,700 on its School Reform Partnership Program. EBRP undoubtedly did benefit from this source of financial support. The linkage is also explicated by the fact that only two "Pre-Collegiate Education Consultants" from Louisiana are listed among a total of 171 people. They are Grady R. Hazel and Bernard J. Weiss. [16]

Implementing the EBRP School Redesign Plan

"The Basin of the Mississippi is the
Body of the Nation

All the other parts are but members,
important in themselves

Yet more important in their relations
to this."

Mark Twain, Life on the Mississippi, 1863.

This quotation begins the 1991 Report to the Community of the EBRP School System. The theme of the Report is fountains. Flowing fountains is a metaphor for the contributions made to the entire nation by the people of South Louisiana. An integrated group of five children standing around a water fountain from which a black child is drinking projects an image of desegregation. A waterfall-like fountain conveys a message about ecological awareness and environmental responsibility that is certainly timely in the "chemical crescent" where many fear polluted ground water. The fountain metaphor is also used to recognize "investors" in the public schools - businesses, philanthropic organizations, parents, and friends of public education in EBRP - from whom there is an outpouring of concern, resources, time and fresh new ideas to augment our school system. Other fountains are the achievements and exemplary programs of the school system, which are profiled. Its revenues of $214,726,814, a 13.06 percent increase over the previous year, are yet another fountain. So are the hundred and one public schools in EBRP which are all listed along with their enhancements. [17]

These are all clear and sparkling fountains. Not one draws water from polluted wells. None mentioned in the Report is brackish. None appears to be pouring forth at any less than optimum flow. The Report is good public relations and communicates a rosy picture of the EBRP School System. But is it accurate, particularly regarding the extent of defacto school desegregation?

ILLUSTRATION TWO

This is one of the many petro-chemical plants in northwestern EBRP. Some of them are located close to residential areas and give off noxious odors.

Another official publication, All About Your School System, 1991-92, is similarly upbeat. Here readers learn that the public schools budget is now $225 million dollars. Expenditure per pupil is $3,700. EBRP gets 60.57 percent of its school budget from the State of Louisiana, 38.69 percent from local sources, and .74 percent from the United States Government.

There are sections of the booklet in which "School Redesign," 'School Clusters," and "Elementary School Pairs" are described. The general aim of desegregation is mentioned, but parents aren't provided with data concerning the extent to which desegregation has actually occurred in Baton Rouge. Other desegregation-related topics in this publication are "Extended Day Programs," "Middle and High Magnet Schools," and "School Transfer." Although the parents are told that all transfers must be in accordance with the regulations of court-ordered desegregation plans, again there is actually no data about the racial make-up of the various schools.

Probably the reason for this editorial policy is that most EBRP parents and their children know only too well about the persistent imbalances. Maybe they don't need any additional information on that score within the Baton Rouge context. Certainly, disclosing the statistics regarding school desegregation wouldn't enhance the reputations of either the authorites or the school board. Apparently the decision has been to remain silent about them. [18]

We know what led up to today's condition. The School Redesign Plan began in September, 1988. Twelve schools participated during the first year. There were more than 2500 applications for transfers, of which 496, or about a fifth, were accepted into the redesign program. At the conclusion of the first year, the program was evaluated, showing an improvement in teacher morale, a decline in teacher absences, and "that at-risk children grew at a slightly higher rate than higher income children."

By February, 1989 the EBRP School System was able to go back to the courts. It was requested that thirty-one more schools be added to the redesign program. At that point none of the plaintiffs in the desegregation case opposed extending the program. So this marked what it was hoped would be the turning point in the thirty-four year old court case seeking to desegregate the parish public schools. Most of the thirty-one schools that became redesign sites at this time were parts of the three and four school clusters ordered by Judge Parker in 1981. They now attracted 2700 transfer applications and almost 2000 students did change schools.

The third year of the School Redesign Program saw nineteen new schools added. That year there were reportedly 2800 transfer applica-

tions and another 2,300 students came into the redesign program. Most were undoubtedly attracted by the innovative programs called enhancements. But their movements also helped to make the EBRP schools somewhat more racially balanced.

The fourth year of implementing school redesign brought sixteen more schools into the program. This expansion means that now seventy-eight of the 101 schools in the EBRP School System officially participate in redesign.

Marketing School Enhancements

An unusual feature of school redesign in EBRP is the creation of brochures describing to their potential constituencies the enhancements intended as incentives for attracting transfer students. The rationale is that the racial make-up of the school can be brought into better balance by bringing in children of the under-represented group who come to have their needs better met. An enhancement is a special focus available at a particular school in addition to the regular basic instructional program taught at all the EBRP schools. The enhancement(s) (many schools indicate having more than one) often exist in tandem with enrichment. This term refers to academic increments to the regular basic instruction. There are also five magnet schools in the EBRP System. Each of these has been oriented either to a special professional preparation orientation such as pre-engineering or pre-medicine; or it has an overall accelerated academic program geared to attracting the most able students of all ethnicities, races and social classes. The public schools here seem to be trying to outdo the private sector, offering challenging, very sophisticated "college-bound" programs.

The school marketing brochures that I obtained are identified in a special section of the bibliography. The sample includes twenty elementary, eight middle, and six high school items. One additional brochure describes the program for coping with dyslexia which functions for students at all levels. A few of these brochures are rather drab, but most demonstrate that an effort is being made to present attractive choices to the public. It seems likely that the public school marketing brochures are intended not only to assist desegregation and redesign, but are also supposed to help counter the flight of some constituents to independent and sectarian schools. A rosy view of public schooling is presented in them. Attractions are described that most non-tax-supported institutions would have great difficulty matching.

One red, white and blue brochure from Nicholson Elementary School, 1143 North Street, features the school mascot, a smiling teddy bear.

There are four enhancement programs at this K-5 institution: Reading Recovery, Project Read, Process Writing, and Discovery Trips. Fifteen "outstanding features" are listed such as a Parent Involvement Program, a state-funded whole-day pre-kindergarten, a choir, gifted resources, a speech therapist, adaptive physical education, guidance and computers. Nine forms of community involvement are identified at Nicholson. Yet this school is housed in the oldest elementary building still in use in EBRP, constructed in 1922. It is located about a mile and a half from the Governor's Mansion near historic Spanish Town in inner city Baton Rouge.

A colorful green and yellow brochure based on the theme, "Come Sparkle With Us," represents Glasgow Middle School, 1676 Glasgow Avenue. Two enhancements are offered at Glasgow: A.D.D. (attention deficit disorder) Program, and Career Exploration. There are also math and science enrichments as well as peer helpers. Five "outstanding features/programs" are identified. Among them are a Great Books Program, a Newspapers in Education Program, Special Education, and an extensive variety of music programs. There are eight additional "special incentives" to attend Glasgow Middle School. There's an honors program, for example, and "Positive Behavioral Incentives" (Gator Bucks), birthday recognition, and "Project Business." Some fifteen optional extra curricular activities are offered at Glasgow such as art, 4-H, and computer clubs. There is a marching band. Athletics include basketball, football, softball, and volleyball. Community involvement at Glasgow includes the school's being adopted by the Junior League of Baton Rouge, Inc. and by A.G. Edwards. The community brings to Glasgow Middle School Volunteers in Public Schools (VIPS), an "I Care" Program, and an annual "Career Fest." Among Glasgow's unique assets are a "spacious newly landscaped campus with outdoor basketball court, softball diamond, and football field, an auditorium and gymnasium, a 'time-out room with moderator', and a 'potato bar'." Many, or even most of these features might be provided at public middle schools throughout the country. The point, however, is that in EBRP site-based management is having some impact and the positive dimensions of the schools are receiving publicity.

Selecting only one high school marketing brochure to analyze is difficult. The one representing Tara High School, 9002 Whitehall Avenue, titled "Seeking Excellence" has been chosen as one of the most representative items. Also, I observed the Tara campus, which is east of Center City Baton Rouge on the margin between the inner city and its affluent southern suburbs. Tara has five main buildings that include a 350 seat auditorium, gym, cafeteria, photo lab, stadium and practice field, auto mechanic and woodworking shops, and a television production studio.

Tara is a ninth through twelfth grade school that, according to the desegregation court order, can accept both black and white transfer students from anywhere in EBRP. Its enhancements are commercial art and drafting, photography, and videography. Perhaps the most attractive marketing technique used to produce this brochure is five photographs of happy-appearing integrated groups of students. There are also heart warming testimonies by young people under the heading, "Students Talk."

> People are what I enjoy most about Tara. We have students from different socio-economic groups. These varied backgrounds have served as a wonderful learning experience for each of us.
>
> Tara has a very comfortable over-all atmosphere; appealing to students as a second home and a place where they can be themselves. It has a unique environment enhanced by a free spirit. It also motivates students to be their best and work toward accomplishing goals they set for themselves.
>
> Tara helps us in being all we can be. For young people of today facing the reality of the here and now, Tara is working to prepare us for a better adult life.

There is no question about the general attractiveness of the redesign school marketing brochures, as these samples demonstrate. They certainly must be serving worthy functions as morale builders and sources of pride for people in these institutions. The impact of site-based management and commercial merchandizing techniques are reflected in them. Apparently academic achievement in the EBRP School System has improved somewhat. The central issue, however, is the extent to which the school redesign hoopla has, in reality, led to effective school desegregation.

Our concern is to find out what school redesign, site-based management, and sophisticated marketing efforts really contribute to the agonizing process of desegregating the public schools. This is especially an issue for schools like Nicholson Elementary that can accept only white transfer students and from which only black children may leave to attend other redesign schools. This indicates that Nicholson remains a predominantly African American institution. There are thirty-three other schools that can accept white transfers only, showing that this is not an unusual problem.

Glasgow Middle and Tara High School can both accept and have leave from them black and white students. This must indicate that some degree of racial integration has been achieved in them, although without actually observing conditions in them, it is hard to arrive at any objective conclusions. There are twenty-eight other schools in the system that can accept either black or white transfers. Fourteen schools, however, must still be predominantly white because only black students are permitted to transfer into them. The extent of the persisting racial imbalances is shown by the numbers of schools that, according to court order, only students in designated racial groups may transfer from.

Only black students may leave	47
Only white students may leave	29
Black or white students may leave . . .	12 [20]

The focus of Chapter Three is going to be on interpreting "School Desegregation and Redesign in Action" in EBRP. The primary sources of Chapter Two have been school board publications and other official documents. Some of them are doubtless skewed toward putting the situation in the very best possible light. Data from interviews, participant-observation, and the coverage of the public schools in the local media are the basis of Chapter Three. Alternative perspectives are being articulated by many of these different sources.

CHAPTER TWO
NOTES

1 Jacques Cattell Press, editor Leaders in Education, Fifth Edition. New York: R.R. Bowker Company, 1974, p. 1153. Dr. Bernard J. Weiss is also listed in Who's Who in Educational Administration. Arlington, VA: American Association of School Administrators, 1988, p. 121. His official address is: Superintendent, East Baton Rouge Parish Schools, P.O. Box 2950, Baton Rouge, LA 70821.

2 At the Crossroads. East Baton Rouge Parish School Redesign Plan. Into the Next Century. Baton Rouge: EBRP School System, 1989. (Originally issued on March 11, 1988; revised April, 1988.)

3 History of the Redesign Plan. Baton Rouge: EBRP School System, June 26, 1991, p. 1.

4 At the Crossroads, pp. 1-2.

5 Ibid., p. 1. (Apparently the page numbers in the booklet are incorrect, as this is actually p. 4. Subsequent references will reflect this mispagination.)

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid. p. 2 (5).

8 Sophie Sa, "Executive Director's Letter," Panasonic Foundation, 1984-1990. Secaucus, N.J.: Panasonic Foundation, Inc., Matsushita Electric Corporation of America, 1990, p. 1.

9 Ibid.

10 Ibid., p. 2.

11 Ibid., p. 5.

12 Ibid., p. 4. See p. 8 for a list of the PF partnerships.

13 Ibid., p. 5.

14 Ibid., pp. 9, 12.

15 Ibid., p. 8.

16 Ibid., pp. 12-13. PF did, however, during the five years grant a total of $114,362 to The University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT. for precollegiate education research, but the specific project isn't specified.

17 The Mark Twain quotation and the subsequent information are from 1991 Report to the Community. Baton Rouge: East Baton Rouge Parish School System, 1991, p. 1.

18 All About Your School System. In East Baton Rouge, 1991-92. Baton Rouge: EBRP School System, 1991, pp. 5, 14-20.

19 History of the Redesign Plan, pp. 1-2.

20 Eligibility Guide. Baton Rouge: EBRP School Board, February, 1991.

Chapter Three

School Desegregation and Redesign in Action

Newspaper coverage regarding public school issues in EBRP gives us another interpretation of desegregation and redesign. Examining articles that have appeared since 1988 draws attention to concerns that apparently were important to parents and taxpayers. An article in June, 1988, for example, described the work of The East Baton Rouge Dropout Prevention Cooperative (DPC) to readers. Although it was an agency of the EBRP School System, the DPC had criticized the Student Rights and Responsibilities Handbook at use in the public schools. It was claimed that the handbook,

> . . . contains too many and often inflexible rules governing student behavior. Schools are over-regulated and practices are too different from school to school. [1]

The DPC specialists perceived the EBRP School System to have excessive student dropout rates. They proposed eight policy changes to address the situation.

1. Reduce the overall number of students who are suspended, retained and expelled.

2. Work toward more realistic attendance policies and more flexible graduate requirements,

3. Stop the practice of retaining kindergarten students who do not meet prescribed standards.

4. Repeal the policy requiring middle school students to repeat an entire grade if they fail reading or math.

5. Develop tutorial programs for students in poor neighborhoods.

6. Train staff to identify students who are potential failures as early as elementary school.

7. Overcome transportation problems which keep parents and students from participating in school events and meetings.

8. Require that all suspensions covering more than a five-day period be reviewed and approved by the superintendent of schools. [2]

A study had been conducted by the collaborative personnel indicating that the students who dropped out or were expelled are the same individuals who have been failed, retained, suspended, and who have had long-term poor school attendance. Undoubtedly one of the motives for school redesign and site-based management came through these recommendations from the DPC.

> The school system exists for the students. Discipline should be administered at the lowest level possible. Parents should be informed of problems before they lead to suspension or expulsion.
>
> Schools need to make a stronger commitment to parental involvement. Too often parents are invited to serve on important committees only to finalize a report. They are not always given the opportunity to become involved in the real workings of the committee. [3]

Further clues about the impact of discipline and dropouts on EBRP School System policy since 1988 are found in a journal article. "School Desegregation and Suspension in East Baton Rouge Parish: A Preliminary Report," came out in The Journal of Negro Education in the fall of that year. One of its authors was a Professor of Sociology at Southern University. The gist of the article is that with declining overall secondary level enrollment, the proportion of black students attending the EBRP middle and high schools had increased. It rose from forty-one percent in 1980 to forty-three percent in 1982, for instance. At the same time, the court order issued in 1981 and put into operation during the 1982-83 school year, "entailed closing some schools, creating several magnet schools, and transferring large numbers of students in a major effort to eliminate surviving 'one-race' schools." [4]

These researchers, Thorton and Treat, observed that when school desegregation began in earnest, in the 1982-83 school year, the racial gap in suspensions widened ominously. White students comprised fifty-five percent of the EBRP student population in grades six through twelve. They received twenty-seven percent of the suspensions. Black

youths accounted for only forty-five percent of the secondary level public school student population, yet they received seventy-three percent of all the suspensions! The racial disproportionality had climbed four percentage points that one school year.[5]

Besides this alarming aggregate evidence, these authors also compiled tables demonstrating that the highest percentages of black students being suspended occurred in predominantly white schools where black students were likely to perceive themselves to have been marginalized. These were the schools to which, by court order, the black young people were being bussed from long distances. Also, at these "least desegregated," highest status, predominantly white institutions, it is most likely that the African American students were being taught by teachers who, themselves, were having their first experience working in interracial classrooms.

The researchers therefore concluded that these were the last school bastions of racial antipathies, prejudices, and associated problems that had resulted from their having to alter long-held, although unconstitutional, patterns of racial discrimination. As a result, the burden of desegregation seems to have been falling most heavily on black males. In light of this finding, it is easier to comprehend why school redesign was the next major policy to be adopted in the EBRP School System. By 1988 it had simply become critical that unbearable conditions in some of the schools be remedied. Desegregation by itself would not work if it resulted in "white flight" and massive black discipline and dropout problems. [6]

The rash of black students being suspended from EBRP secondary schools couldn't have come at a worse time. It was in the fall of 1989 that the "Master Plan" for Louisiana education was adopted by the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education. It had been under discussion for several years. Many of the debates took place at the state capitol in Baton Rouge. They must have had an impact when it came to adopting the EBRP School Redesign Plan. Often the goals and initiatives articulated in the two documents converge. The "Master Plan" got plenty of media coverage, doubtless influencing public perceptions.

Both the "Master Plan" and "Redesign" aim to increase student achievement. Both claim to be designed to get more students to finish high school. The quality of school staffs was to be improved through both initiatives. Instruction was to be better. Access to programs would be opened up. Aid to local school districts would be equalized. Public understanding was going to enhanced with involvement plans at each school. And every school's performance would be monitored by well publicized "report cards." [7]

Imagine the concern of the Baton Rouge educational establishment that accompanied the realization that the embarrassment of the excessive black suspensions at elite, predominantly white secondary schools was soon going to be common knowledge. Everybody would know about the high dropout rates. Not only would this cause consternation among many of their own constituency, but it would also be humiliating when the state capital district failed to meet Master Plan goals. Something had to be done. According to my analysis, therefore, Superintendent Weiss was hired - coming with a plan for meeting the crisis. It appears that this broader context, although it is never mentioned in the official EBRP School System documents that I examined, was actually the catalyst of the School Redesign Plan.

At the same time, during the winter of 1989, the phenomenon known as attention deficit disorder (ADD) was becoming known in EBRP schools. Students with ADD are unable to focus their attention on anything for more than a few minutes at a time. Some ADD kids were withdrawn and seemed to be "spaces out." Others showed aggressive and hyperactive behavior. ADD children, in many cases, had been given prescription drugs, typically Rydlin. ADD had the potential of being the psychological explanation of the anti-social behavior causing the great numbers of suspensions, expulsions, and dropouts.

An enhancement program was started for ADD children at Park Elementary School in the fall of 1989. Here positive reinforcement is used in order to try to modify the ADD students' conduct. Multi-sensory, hands-on instructional approaches are enphasized. Although there is only one ADD specialist at the school, Cathy Craig, she prepares the classroom teachers there to be able to cope with ADD clients - who are mainstreamed into regular classes.

Park is an inner city school in an economically depressed neighborhood. It previously drew all of its students from the black households in the surrounding neighborhood. Many of these children were lagging behind in physiological development and social skills. The Park schoolchildren, nevertheless, succeeded in bringing up their scores on standardized tests. Now the white children enrolled at Park Elementary have all come for the ADD enhancement. All fifty-six ADD children at the school, in fact, at the time the newspaper article was written, were white. Due to the court order and state-mandated restrictions, the ADD program at Park Elementary School couldn't admit any students from outside EBRP. Even more inhibiting, black children in EBRP needing the interventions to overcome ADD could not transfer to this school. It is, to be sure an example of how the redesign plan works to achieve a degree of voluntary desegregation. Simultaneously, however, it seems to be building a backlash against court ordered desegregation among black parents whose children are denied admission to a program that might help many of them.

The white principal of the Park Elementary School, Lora Petureau, articulates the business-like philosophy of school redesign.

> We're in a service business. You have to make the clients happy and the child is the client. The profit in the children's education. [8]

Unsaid, but perhaps equally true, is the fact that in this case at least, school redesign functions as a lever to loosen court ordered desegregation patterns.

There is evidence in the newspaper coverage that the dropout problem in the EBRP schools did receive attention. The number of students known to have dropped out of the local schools decreased from 840 in the 1983-84 school year to 750 in 1988-89. Some of the apparent improvement is offset by a decrease in the public school population. It still appeared, however, that the interventions made by the EBRP Dropout Prevention Collaborative (DPC) were having a positive effect. Meetings with parents, community members, and business representatives were held in order to enlist help in the struggle. There were also teacher workshops on dropout prevention.

The reporter, however, admits that it is difficult to be very precise about the magnitude of the dropout problem because no good tracking system exists. Most of the available data, in fact, depends on the reports of child welfare supervisors. It is extremely hard for them to identify youths who have permanently left school. Some who fail to attend school for a period of time may later go back. Others may be able to earn a high school equivalency diploma. Yet, there were in 1985, for example, 4,795 students who entered the ninth grade in EBRP. Only 3,082 students, or sixty-four percent of the original class, graduated from high school in the spring of 1989. But no reliable means exists to determine just how many youths who didn't graduate on time, in fact, were dropouts.[9]

Only two weeks after the first article appeared the same reporter was chronicling the impending demise of the whole dropout prevention program. DPC had been funded with $95,000 for an initial three years by the Ford Foundation. When that grant ran out, the DPC was penniless. A search was made for corporations and other private donors ready to underwrite the special program for at-risk students. It was located at Northdale Academy and had been developed by DPC. This must have been successful, because Northdale Academy is still listed as being in operation in 1991-92. This crisis, however, illustrates the fragility of many educational innovations that depend on external sources of funding. [10]

As 1989 drew to a close 59,000 opinion surveys were sent home with the students by the EBRP school authorities. They were intended to encourage the parents to register their views about priorities in the public schools. The greatest overall emphasis requested by the EBRP parents was quality education. This outdistanced addressing problems such as alcohol and drug abuse, cigarettes, and busing. It even drew more support than from parents concerned about over-crowded classrooms, low teacher pay, and inadequate school budgets. Many parents, however, were also worried but school discipline, and threats such as violence, thefts, and lack of safety. While this was the general results, the major problem identified by some parents in the (predominantly white) southern attendance districts was busing. The school board member from this area commented, "Parents in my district have always been opposed to forced busing. . . . Many transferred their children to private and parochial schools after the 1981 desegregation order was issued." [11]

Toward the end of February, 1990 the report of Dr. Harold Knight, the external evaluator of the EBRP redesign and desegregation plan from the University of Southern Mississippi, was made public. This was a 155 page text replete with graphs and statistics. Knight claimed in it that the EBRP plan was helping to avoid the phenomenon of "tipping" - the rapid flight of whites from a school system once it becomes about sixty percent black. This investigator reported that in his study of the forty-three schools that were then in the redesign program that there was some increase in white student enrollment at predominantly black elementary schools. Knight commented:

> This is showing me definite progress in the trend of white enrollment in the schools. . . . he pointed to a graph showing a thirty-five percent increase in white population at elementary schools that joined the redesign two years ago. [12]

A School Board member, Donna Deshotels, however, pointed out that Knight hadn't compared redesign with non-redesign schools. She claimed that the dirth of white enrollment had been reversed in the non-redesign schools as well. Knight's data, therefore, didn't convince her that it was site-based management, enhancements, marketing and the other incentives of redesign that had actually caused the segregation trend to reverse.

Another of the main things that was perceived to flaw Knight's report was his projections. His expectations at Capitol and Glen Oaks High Schools, for example, seemed likely to be skewed. Capitol High had had very few white students when it joined the redesign plan. Glen Oaks High is situated in an area where the surrounding population is rapidly becoming more black. The relative dirth of interracial enrollments at these institutions, therefore, it was argued, reflect the realities of the population distribution in EBRP. The anticipated decline of white enrollments at these high schools, however, wouldn't necessarily hold true at Istrouma High School. This predominantly black institution was scheduled to join the redesign plan in the fall of 1991. Then it was expected that enhancements at Istrouma would enable to school to attract more white clientele.

Knight reported that black enrollment at white majority high schools in EBRP had increased slightly from fall 1988 to fall 1989. He anticipated its increasing by nine percent in 1990-91 to 1,559. Another hopeful finding in Knight's assessment was that during the preceding two years increasing numbers of students were coming into the public system from church related and private schools. The first year 182 private school students asked to transfer to public redesign schools and 124 were accepted. The second year 278 requests for such transfers were logged and 137 accepted. Although this data appeared to be upbeat, it should have been interpreted in light of the magnitude of students who had left the EBRP public schools since 1981. Apparently Knight hadn't examined the percentage returning, which would have been quite small. [13]

When the mass media documentation is reviewed, it becomes evident that the report of the Knight Evaluation in 1990 was a watershed event. Prior to its publication most of the coverage was supportive of the school redesign plan. Many of the articles, in fact, look like re-written press releases from the EBRP School System public communication unit. Subsequently, the newspaper coverage becomes much more critical. In some instances, it is downright antagonistic. The previous honeymoon has ended.

Questionning the School Redesign Plan

The new mood was demonstrated in a raucous series of newspaper articles raising questions about the real impact of the school redesign plan on desegregation. Reporter Scott Dyer opened an extensive article on March 14, 1991 with this indictment.

> School system officials have inflated enrollment figures and overstated the effectiveness of the redesign program in an apparent effort to make it appear more successful than it really is. [13]

This investigative reporter asserts that redesign is more "glorified names and fanfare than substance." There are, he claims, gross discrepancies in the enrollments at redesign schools. The statistic that the number of students in redesign institutions, for example, which had supposedly swelled to include 34,129 individuals, actually counts participation in art shows, band concerts, guidance counseling and other such activities. These go on at most schools, whether or not they participate in the redesign plan. The figures given by the central staff and those of the local school authorities widely differ regarding the numbers of children involved in redesign programs.

TABLE ONE

ENROLLMENT IN EERP SCHOOL REDESIGN PROGRAMS [14]

School	Staff Estimate	School Estimate
Broadmoor Middle	671	671
Broadmoor High	276	221
Eden Park Elementary	431	431
Forest Heights Elementary	381	20
Glen Oaks Middle	758	150
Glen Oaks High	230	211
Park Elementary	530	530
Sherwood Middle	887	800
Tara High	394	200
Woodlawn High	1,016	160
Ten School Total	5,574	3,394

Dyer concludes that the impact of redesign on desegregation has been negligible.

> Of the 32 redesign schools that went into the program with one race accounting for 70 percent or more of their total student enrollment, only nine have made any progress in terms of desegregation. In 18 other cases, the percentage of majority race students increased even more under redesign, and the racial balance didn't change in the remaining five schools.

This reporter goes on to make a series of additional criticisms. According to Dyer, some of the redesign programs were actually in place years before those schools joined the new redesign plan. He claims that some of the secondary schools, in fact, advertize as enhancements courses that are readily available at almost any middle or high school in EBRP. At some, supposed redesign transfer students never participate in the enhancement that it was claimed brought them in. In most cases, moreover, no effort had been made to determine whether or not redesign resulted in academic gains for the participating students.

Dyer points out other redesign faults. He discovered that site-based management was often more rhetoric than reality. The plans devised by local management teams were frequently aborted by the central office. Enhancements, for instance, requested by the school management team one place would be rejected by the system administrators. Yet they would later be assigned to other schools where no interest had previously been expressed in them. Worse, lack of funding for redesign forced many site-based management teams to delay or scale down their programs. All of the funding specifically for the redesign plan in the EBRP School System is $800,000 for personnel and $1.1 million for transportation. The individual redesign schools have therefore been forced to become fund-raisers. Management teams must write grant proposals and seek funding from community organizations willing to pay for equipment and other scarce resources. [15]

The same day that Dyer's exposé appeared, the State-Times also carried a rejoinder by Superintendent Weiss. The Superintendent said that he too was surprised by the figures given him by his staff. He intended to get answers about the discrepancies from the responsible personnel. Weiss is quoted as declaring that,

> This bothers me a great deal. I really don't want to see any distorted or inflated or inaccurate figures given under any circumstances for anything. That's ridiculous, to have incorrect data. [16]

Weiss further stated that,

> Those who criticize redesign say it hasn't made the system unitary, it hasn't desegregated the system. I would say fine, but if we would have stayed with what we had, would that have done it? There was no indication that it was heading in that direction. [17]

The comments of two other authorities are included in this article. When he approved the expansion of the redesign plan in 1990, U.S. District Judge John Parker emphasized that,

> . . . the redesign plan has never been accepted or approved by the court as a desegregation plan, and the court does not accept it as such.

Attorney Robert Williams, speaking on behalf of the NAACP, the co-plaintiff in the lawsuit that brought about court ordered school desegregation in 1981, claimed that,

> Redesign is not a desegregation plan. I don't know where it's taking us, but I don't think it's taking us where we want to go. [18]

Subsequent newspaper articles fanned the flames of the controversy. An article in the Morning Advocate on March 15 expanded on the previous coverage. By this time Weiss had conferred with his staff who apparently still couldn't explain the discrepancies. Weiss vowed that they would,

> . . . go over every charge that's in there. Unfortunately, a great many of them will not hold up under scrutiny. Now what is out there will be printed in people's minds as a fact. I don't think it provides the public with a legitimate picture of what's going on. [19]

An "Inside Report" by Scott Dyer in the Morning Advocate on March 18, 1991 carried the critique of school redesign farther. Dyer wrote:

> Last year students in non-redesign elementary, middle and high schools outscored their counterparts in redesign schools on the California Achievement Test.

> If all goes according to plan, critics won't be able to say that in a year and a half. It won't necessarily mean that any trend has changed. But because the entire school system will have been drawn into the redesign program by then, there will be no basis for comparison. [20]

Dyer comments that many of the redesign components such as extended-day, Montessori, Attention Deficit Disorder and dyslexia programs can operate in conventional as well as redesign schools. As he sees it, the bottom line is that school redesign costs the EBRP taxpayers an additional $1,900,000 a year. It is therefore prudent, in his judgment, to operate what is, in effect, two separate public school systems - conventional and redesign - long enough to obtain evidence that one or the other proves itself. He urges that redesign remain in some pilot schools until it can be demonstrated to give superior results.

Although Superintendent Weiss had claimed that the redesign data wasn't seriously flawed, ten days later an article by John Rice headined, "Redesign Student Numbers Lowered in Newest Report." Now the EBRP School Board Office had released a report showing that only 21,886 students were currently involved in the redesign program. This is more than a third fewer than previously claimed. Weiss was now quoted as declaring that,

> There is no aberration; the discrepancy is not tremendously significant. You are simply looking at numbers, not the impact of the numbers itself. [21]

At this point a member of the school board, Donna Deshotels, was calling for an independent audit of the program by a neutral outside party. Deshotels asserted that, " . . . the superintendent is incapable of performing an impartial study." [22]

The new report by the EBRP School System officials on the redesign plan had been thoroughly analyzed by the press within a few days. Now John Rice printed these words as his lead sentence.

> Despite contentions that the redesign program has made "remarkable progress in a short time," only 6 percent - or 3,660 of the school system's 60,000 students - have transferred to other schools. [23]

The cold facts about the progress toward desegregation at the one-race (seventy percent or more) redesign schools are charted.

TABLE TWO

RACIAL DESEGREGATION IN EBRP ONE-RACE REDESIGN SCHOOLS [24]

Elementary School	Year to start redesign	% Black at start	% Black in March, 1991
Banks	1988-89	99	97*
Befair	1990-91	98	99
Bellingrath	1990-91	2	7*
Brookstown	1989-90	84	87
Crestworth	1990-91	100	100
Dalton	1989-90	98	98
Delmont	1989-90	90	95
Dufrocq	1989-90	95	94*
Eden Park	1990-91	95	96
Forest Heights	1989-90	84	86
Glen Oaks Park	1989-90	79	86
Greenville	1990-91	66	72
Harding	1989-90	83	81*
Howell Park	1989-90	78	80
Lanier	1989-90	78	81
Melrose	1990-91	94	97
Merrydale	1988-89	79	82
Northeast	1990-91	25	27*
N. Highlands	1989-90	87	88
Park	1989-90	99	89*
Polk	1988-89	100	87*
Progress	1989-90	82	89
Ryan	1989-90	73	81
Riveroaks	1990-91	5	4
University Terrace	1990-91	78	77*

* denotes improvement in the area of desegregation

As if circling for the kill, a series of articles and editorials followed, demonstrating the decline of confidence in school redesign as a desegregation tool. An editorial on April 8, 1991 announced, "School Redesign Losing Credibility." The new redesign report was characterized by this writer as "a clumsy damage control effort." The "bureaucratic runabout" experienced by a reporter when seeking clarification of the data is also mentioned. The writer goes on to characterize the nine page report as being as "hard to swallow" as the original report. Saying, "In short it kind of blows our mind," the editorial writer identifies five more aspects of it that seem to be questionable - beyond those previously discussed in the newspaper.[25]

Curt Eysink wrote about "Redesign Not Easing School Racial Ratios" in an October 10, 1991 article. The final blow of the year came in an "Inside Report" also written for the Morning Advocate by Curt Eysink on December 3, 1991. That headline reads, "A School System that Can't Count," and Eysink draws attention to half a dozen previous times when the official redesign information turned out to be erroneous. He concludes that,

> Eight months later it's clear that the redesign office does not have the capability to record and retrieve data instantaneously, and that the right things are not happening.
>
> . . . the fact remains that the school system has spent two months tallying up redesign enrollment and still can't produce a complete and accurate headcount for a program that is the hallmark of Weiss' tenure.[26]

It is as if Eysink is driving the last nail into the redesign coffin.

Meanwhile other initiatives were being taken by the leaders of the EBRP School System. A school board member had released a list of the racial ratios of the faculty at the sixty-three elementary schools in the district. Ron Johnson found out that seven schools had faculties composed mostly of black teachers. Thirty schools, however, had teaching staffs that were at least seventy percent white. Johnson admitted that similar patterns exist among the administrative ranks. Overall, although the public school enrollment is now fifty-five percent black, only a bit less than forty percent of the teachers are black. The problem is increasing because relatively few black young people are choosing to have careers in the teaching profession. The board of education, however, has adopted a policy of integration so that there will be a proper racial ratio in the teaching staffs at all of the EBRP public schools.[27]

The School Board unanimously adopted a five-year strategic plan in mid-June, 1991. It is designed to anticipate and meet the future needs of the EBRP School System.

> The plan contains strategies for meeting goals that include cutting the dropout rate, improving achievement test scores, decreasing the failure rate and instituting a pre-kindergarten program. [28]

At the same meeting, the School Board also voted to allow elementary school children to attend their neighborhood schools if the schools are already desegregated. Although this policy decision is popular with parents who had attended the meeting to urge its adoption, it still has to be approved by the U.S. District Judge who is likely to view it differently.

Perhaps a clue was given to understanding some of the ongoing controversy by an article written by Curt Eysink in the Morning Advocate on August 12, 1991. The occasion was the fourth straight time in eight years that EBRP was turned down for an eight million dollar Magnet Schools Assistance Program competitive grant by the U.S. Department of Education. The funds were intended for beefing up the instructional programs at predominantly black schools so that their enhancements can attract white students.

Superintendent Weiss was predictably angered by the loss of this badly needed funding. MSAP grants are reserved for school systems operating under federal court desegregation orders. Every two years about $150 million is appropriated by Congress to fund the program. It is understandable that Weiss would want to see the proposals that were funded in order to be assured that the funds are being distributed equitably. From his perspective, of course, the ongoing flap about the impact of redesign on desegregation threatens his ability to compete for federal dollars. The original inflated figures, in fact, may well have been intended for grant readers in Washington, D.C. rather than for local consumption. [29]

A proposed new school desegregation plan was headlined in a newspaper article in September, 1991. It has been designed to change the current EBRP attendance zones, eliminate school clusters, and keep all bus rides to under a half hour. The School Board would eventually vote on the overall plan, but at the time of writing its members had seen only the parts of it affecting their own districts. Several, nevertheless, commented on it. Michael Branch, a young white board member who is a law student at LSU, said,

> I am encouraged for this reason. It just seems like anything would be better than what we have right

> now. The demographics have changed so much since that 1981 court order that I am certain that (the) staff can do something to address doing away with the cluster(s) and getting children closer to home to schools. [30]

The cluster system was established by Judge John Parker's 1981 court order. It created ten clusters made up of thirty-five schools in EBRP. The clusters are groups of three or four schools that have been brought together. The aim is to get white students to attend predominantly black schools, and blacks to go to formerly all-white institutions. A black child in Eden Park, for example, could be bused to Broadmoor, a school in a white neighborhood. Travel in the reverse direction could also be mandated. The problem is that many white parents withdrew their children from the public schools and enrolled them at church related and private schools rather than allowing them to attend the predominantly black schools to which they had been assigned.

Another school board member, Al Trickett, had this to say about the proposed changes.

> I think the concept is very good, and without going into any particulars, I only have questions about one or two items. I only saw what applied to my end of the parish, but it looked very good. They have been working primarily on elementary schools, plus some middle schools. That's where the biggest problems are. [31]

Eva Legard, the school board President, was reportedly upset because the desegregation plan proposed to close Dufrocq and Nicholson Elementary Schools, two redesign plan institutions located in her (black) district. Clustering, in other words, was being perceived as the chief problem to be surmounted. There apparently was little concern for maintaining schools in black neighborhoods where they often were functioning as local community centers. The desegregation accomplished in the previous decade had involved busing black children to previously all-white schools. Even when attractive enhancements were offered, there had been much less success with getting white children to attend mainly black schools. The existence of several elementary schools in black neighborhoods was therefore being threatened. The underlying cause of their being closed would be the racial imbalance of parental willingness to desegregate if busing their children is involved or if the children would be a minority at the receiving school.

The final line of the article states that,

> Any new plan approved by the board would have to be submitted to (Judge) Parker. [32]

The school system authorities and the Board of Education, in other words, do not have the ultimate power to negotiate and settle this vital policy issue.

By November 4, 1991 a Morning Advocate editorial contained these comments about the proposed new school desegregation plan.

> It's a promising idea, and well worth the exhaustive airing its about to receive at 10 public hearings, beginning tonight at 7 at R.E. Lee High.
>
> No doubt the plan faces considerable scepticism and numerous calls for revision as school officials begin the tortuous process of seeking public, board and federal court approval.
>
> But a few points are worth keeping in mind as that process begins.
>
> At first blush, the biggest obstacle is not the educational or legal soundness of the program, but its enormous initial cost. The biggest public construction program in Baton Rouge history is an integral part of the plan.
>
> The pricetag for building about 20 schools and revamping or expanding most of the remaining schools has not even been estimated. But less ambitious plans proposed in the past were tagged at more than $400 million.
>
> Business officials already have questioned the ability of the depressed economy to shoulder the added tax burden, especially since city-parish officials are considering a major tax proposal as well. [33]

The editorial writer concludes that some specifics are lacking. What, for example, will be the fate of the much-touted school redesign plan if this new approach is adopted? What is to be done during the considerable time lag before getting the new schools in use? Also,

the entire plan has to be adopted and implemented as a total unit. A seemingly minor change in one aspect of it, this writer believes, can cause ripples that will have a major impact elsewhere.

Parents, however, tend to focus their attention on the neighborhood schools, attendance zones, and programs that specifically affect their children. School board members are elected by voters in each attendance district to represent that part of the system. Yet, as much as is humanly possible, school board members must avoid looking only at their own election districts. They must support what's best for the whole system. Given the history of intergroup relations in EBRP, however, this is a big order. The editorial writer concurs with Lou Hines, a school board member who urges others on the board, "not to let parochialism get in the way of straight thinking." Clearly, in the new desegregation plan the board, the school authorities, the court, and the community face a conundrum.

Field Study/Participant Observation Data

When on January 6, 1992 I returned to Baton Rouge for a ten day field study, although I didn't yet realize it, the redesign plan of the EBRP School System was already a dead issue. I quickly found out that the contentions were now raging elsewhere - regarding the new school desegregation proposal, an impending payless workday when the public schools were to be closed by the school board, concerns about the physical safety of students and teachers in the public schools, and questions about the effectiveness of programs such as dyslexia intervention. Soon I was encountering people's perceptions of desegregation and redesign first-hand.

The day after my arrival I went to the School Board Headquarters to make courtesy calls at the offices of the Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction. Their secretaries accepted my professional card and recommended that I step over to the public information desk to get official statements and sample school marketing brochures.

Several months prior to the trip, I had written to Superintendent Weiss, requesting permission to observe in some of the redesign schools. My letter was referred to the Assistant Superintendent who rejected my request on the grounds that the school administrators and teachers were too busy implementing redesign to host my visits. Nevertheless, I again reiterated my need to make observations in redesign schools and classrooms. The secretary pleasantly took down my local address and telephone number, saying that I would be contacted within a few days. Although the telephone has an answering machine, no calls from the EBRP School System headquarters were received while I was in Baton Rouge. It was fast becoming apparent that I was being stone-walled. Alternative routes would be necessary if I was going to have any direct contact with school desegregation and redesign in EBRP.

That day an "Inside Report" article on "School Unions in Tough Spot" in the Morning Advocate caught my eye. Curt Eysink was writing about an agreement made the previous August by the EBRP Association of Educators, the Baton Rouge Federation of Teachers, the Baton Rouge Association of Support Employees, the PTA, the Superintendent, and the eight school board members to close down the system for three payless days during the upcoming school year unless the parish voters agreed to raise property taxes enough to balance the budget. It was too late, however, to get the proposal on the ballot. Now all of the school employees were about to loose three days of pay. The first day of school closure was to be January 13, 1992. Final arguments on the issue would take place at the regular school board meeting at the headquarters auditorium on January 9. Attending this confrontation

ILLUSTRATION THREE

These are examples of the identifications handed out to the EBRP School System teachers who packed the meeting of the Board of Education at which the decision was made to close the schools for one payless day in order to help balance the budget. The two main collective bargaining organizations are the Louisiana Association of Educators (LAE) and the East Baton Rouge Federation of Teachers (EBRFT).

in a public forum would be my first opportunity as a participant-observer in the EBRP School System. [34]

These are excerpts from my field notes.

> As I approached the building I could observe maybe fifty people - school board employees and teachers - carrying placards expressing their disapproval of being deprived of three days pay. Many of the signs also pointed out that children would be loosing valuable instruction time. The demonstrators were both white and black.
>
> Entering the building I went into the auditorium which is designed especially for school board meetings. There is an elevated curved table in front with seats for the school board members, the Secretary of the Board, and the Superintendent of Schools. There are tables with seats at them in the "well" for school board employees who are specialists: the attorney, and the chief financial officer, for example. Overhead is a large electric light board with the names of the school board members. It registers their votes on each motion: N, Y, or A (absent).
>
> Although many of the seats on the audience side were already occupied, I found a place in the third row center. There is a light barricade or "fence" separating this area from that occupied by the Board, with a podium facing the officials for speakers to use as they give testimony. [35]

The meeting officially began with a prayer by a clergyman for the parents of Baton Rouge. There was then the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States Flag led by a little boy from Parkview Oaks Elementary School. The children participating received certificates. An award was presented to the outstanding Louisiana science teacher of 1991-1992. It was announced that a pre-school language development program had received recognition in a U.S. Department of Education publication.

A newspaper story the previous morning charged that auditors had estimated that almost $79,000 of public funds was "mismanaged, misappropriated, or fraudulently used at Capitol High School during the first two and a half years when the school operated a bingo game." [36] Responding to a query from a board member, Superintendent Weiss mildly replied that the issue about funds raised by the Capitol High School Booster Club, but improperly accounted for, "had been resolved." The

remaining hour and a half of meeting time was devoted to the funding crisis and impending school closure day.

Virtually all of the speakers represent school board employees' organizations. The Federation of Teachers' representative, a black man, suggests postponing the January 13 closure. He recommends asking for legislative action to reduce EBRP's obligation to fund retirement benefits. Also legislative action could bring medical premiums more into line with the costs. Another speaker, Linda Kelly, announces that she has identified over a million dollars that has been allocated to purchase new buses. Couldn't this sum be transferred to meet the immediate fiscal crisis? A staff member explains that all of the current revenue projections indicate that there will be a shortfall.

The spokesperson for the Baton Rouge Association of School Employees points out that twelve month workers will be laid off for two weeks or more. He points out the need for more adequate revenue. A millage option must be put on the ballot. EBRP makes very low per-pupil expenditures, he comments. Some of the employees are on the poverty lines, although they are working fulltime. The representative of the East Baton Rouge Association of Professional School Educators (APPLE) recommends a system-wide reduction of administrators - fewer principals and assistant principals. She asserts that,

> What's in jeopardy is the coalition needed to pass a millage. It's time to invest in employees and community. You're kidding yourself if you believe that things that hurt teachers don't ultimately hurt students. Vote on it. We'll be watching the board (the lights recording how each school board member voted).[37]

An older man, apparently a frequent commentator, claims that he "speaks for the public."

> We all fight one another - unions, board, administration, employees, Justice Department, Federal Courts, court orders . . . Meanwhile, court ordered busing costs fifteen billion dollars in ten years! Let's clean up our act. [38]

A Parent-Teachers Association spokeswoman declares,

> Education is in a crisis. Think of the billions of dollars we blew up in the Middle East. Everyone needs to be writing to their representatives in Congress. Stop splitting up and begin to tear down fences. Everybody is their own "King" of their own "Mountain." We need an integrated, overall parish (spending) plan taking in all the budgets (she means fire, police, sheriff's office, social services - as well as education). [39]

The Superintendent is asked if he has a solution to the crisis. Replying that realistic sources of money must be found, Weiss asks his financial officer to provide information. The data given aren't good. According to this official, the schools' income is down at least a million dollars.

It is as if the afternoon has been devoted to an exercise of catharsis. The employee organizations are trying to demonstrate that they've defended their members' interests. The school board members voice astonishment that the same organizations that agreed to forego three days' pay as a ploy to bring the crisis to a head and get the tax increase on the ballot now don't want to go through with the deal. The Superintendent and his staff present themselves as being between the proverbial "rock and a hard place." Either the schools could be closed for the three payless days or programs would have to be eliminated - which are not specified. Usually the confrontation is conducted with decorum, but occasionally it gets harsh and the noise level rises.

The school board votes to go ahead with the January 13 closure day. If finances become available before June, however, they indicate their willingness to eliminate one of the other projected three closure days. There are many signs of depression and anger as the fact that teachers and other school board employees won't be paid for next Monday sinks it. It is as if I have been witnessing a well choreographed opera bouffe in which all the characters played their assigned roles. The final outcome was a foregone conclusion. That evening I watch a segment of the proceedings on the local newscast. There I am, front and center, while the controversy swirls around the room. This not the "one big happy family" image that I had expected with school redesign.

The next morning I am still faced with the fact that I have no means of getting to see the operations of any of the redesign schools. How can I break the stalemate? I decide to visit the School Redesign Office at the Valley Service Center. At about 10:30 A.M. I walk through the entrance, register with the security police, and am directed to my destination. I make my way to the gymnasium of the former school and find the Redesign Office in what appears to have been formerly the locker room or physical education office. The receptionist indicates a woman who is introduced as one of two supervisors. She tells me that the Coordinator is the person with whom I should talk. But she will be involved in a meeting all morning. She'll be back that afternoon, however, and I am given her telephone number to call and make an appointment. I go on my way, wondering if this will be another runaround.

At 2 P.M. I called the Coordinator, Mrs. Arminta Bolden, from a pay phone at LSU. Apparently she hadn't been informed about my visit that morning, because at first she thought I was calling long distance from Connecticut. When that was straightened out, Mrs. Bolden invited me to come right over. These are my notes of our conversation.

Arminta Bolden is an attractive, middle aged, black woman. She invited me into her office, sat down to give me an overview of school redesign, and was quite talkative. I got the impression that this wasn't an unusual occurrence.

Mrs. Bolden said that she well understood what I meant by "defacto segregation" in the public schools because she grew up and was educated in Indiana at a time when this was the fact there. Apparently she met her husband, who is from Louisiana, when he was in military service in Indiana and the couple also lived for a year or two in New York State. However, Mrs. Bolden has now lived for twenty-three years in Baton Rouge. She has been a teacher, then got into administration, and four years ago was appointed to be Coordinator of School Redesign for the EBRP public schools. She works under the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, but appears to have quite a bit of autonomy.

She told me that the main features of the redesign plan were developing site-based management, having advisory councils at each school, and developing either magnet programs or "enhancements" that can be marketed in order to attract the attention of parents to send their children in order to reduce racial imbalances.

I was told that there had been quite a bit of resistance to the new approaches, especially from older administrators who didn't know how to function with much more democratic autonomy for their schools. Many had to learn additional skills in group dynamics, public relations, communication, budgeting, and setting priorities and goals. They had to develop means of evaluating their innovations so that they would be accountable. There were cases in which administrators and teachers chose not to participate. According to Mrs. Bolden there were no repercussions in these cases. Others went in very tentatively with the attitude that "this will soon pass." They had probably concluded that the

redesign plan was the brain child of the superintendent and would end as soon as he left town.

> Mrs. Bolden was particularly proud of the special program for children with dyslexia - the only one in the entire state to function K - 12. Teachers had been sent at considerable cost to Southern Methodist University to study at a Center that specializes in preparing professionals in the field of addressing dyslexia and other problems of learning disabled students. They, in turn, trained other EBRP teachers when they got back. They now even offer institutes to train teachers from other school systems. This earns some money to help meet the high costs of developing the program and procuring the needed materials. [40]

By this time, it was after 3 P.M. on a Friday afternoon. I met the woman who heads the dyslexia intervention program, who was in the midst of a conference with one of the teachers who works with dyslexic students. I also met a young woman who works in the redesign schools developing a reading enhancement program. Mrs. Bolden arranged for me to go out to see several of the redesign schools with these colleagues beginning at 8 A.M. on the following Tuesday, January 14, the next day the schools would be open. So I thanked Mrs. Bolden and the others, wishing them a pleasant long weekend, and left. As I made my way toward the door, Mrs. Bolden smiled and said that she would be attending a redesign planning meeting at a local synagogue on Monday. She told me that the rabbi is involved in the public school redesign program.

Visits to Three Redesign Schools

Tuesday morning found me at the School Redesign Office at about 7:50 A.M. I was soon out on the road with the Coordinator of the reading program for dyslexic students. We went in my (rented) car because over the weekend she had helped her daughter, who attends LSU, move. Unfortunately, the sun roof on her car had been left open during a sudden rainstorm, getting the seats soaked. We were laughing about "What parents don't do for their children." -

Our first destination was Kenilworth Middle School in a South Baton Rouge subdivision of beautiful upper middle class homes with broad lawns and flowering trees. This is obviously a predominantly white section of the city. The parking area in front of the school was quite full when we drove up. I found an empty space and we walked into the building.

ILLUSTRATION FOUR

Kenilworth Middle School, 7600 Boone Drive, Baton Rouge, LA. This facility is located in the southwest part of the city, east of Lee Drive, between Perkins and Highland Roads. It is in an affluent neighborhood of beautiful homes with immaculate gardens and lawns. There is a large, well filled, parking area in front of the Kenilworth building, which is a sprawling, single level edifice. Having been constructed during the 1970's, many Kenilworth classrooms have no windows and lack any natural light or ventilation. It was pointed out, however, that in the Louisiana heat and humidity, air conditioning is a necessity. The near windowless structure probably makes cooling easier.

Kenilworth students are mainly white, but a good number of black children were also observed at the school. The faculty seemed to be mostly white. There were some black personnel in the school office. The principal is a white woman. Kenilworth can accept both black and white transfer students and children of both races may leave it for some other redesign school. The enhancements at Kenilworth are a multisensory curriculum for dyslexic students (which the researcher observed) and a multicultural liberal arts program.

First stop was the Kenilworth office, a busy place at 8:15 A.M. with a dozen children or so getting admission slips from clerks. We met the assistant principal, a black woman, who welcomed us. Then we made our way to the Dyslexia Center. This occupies several small rooms crammed with instructional materialsm but without windows. The teacher we had come to observe was just finishing a lesson with four students. We greeted her and them, and then talked about the relatively balmy, sunny weather in Louisiana and Connecticut's colder climate. One of the boys said that he liked snow and would enjoy living in New England.

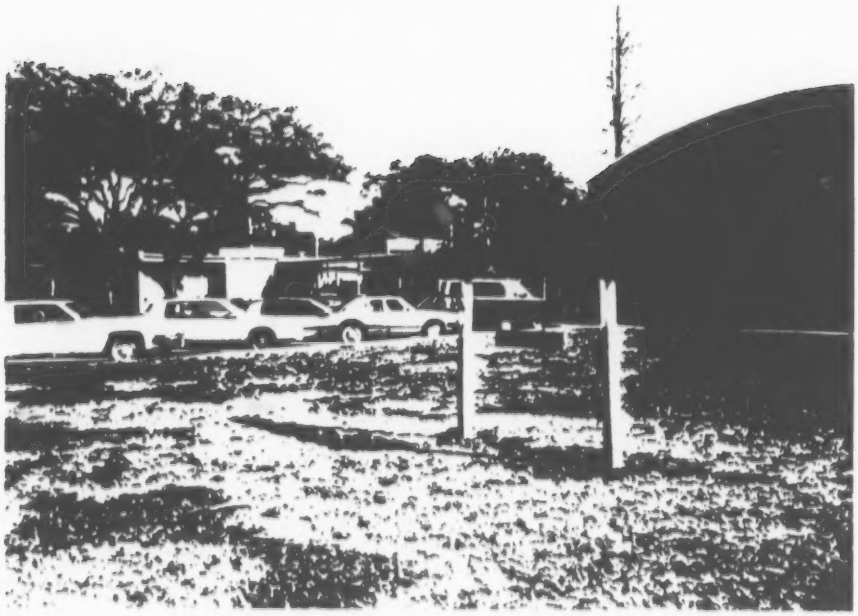
Three students arrived for the next class. They were on reading level three. The instruction consisted of many short periods of very specific activities. Cards with letters on them were flashed, for example. The students used manuals. They got up to do work at the board. There were two boys and a girl. They appeared to be thirteen or fourteen years of age. After skill building activities, the teacher read aloud a high interest short selection from an essay by Mark Twain. The students were able to answer questions on the contents with ease.

We had a conversation after that class ended concerning the preparation teachers need for teaching dyslexic students to read. According to this teacher, the Dyslexia Program is now provided at several schools, and the parents can send their children needing this intervention to these schools - thus helping to reduce defacto segregation. However, with only one exception, all the students whom we had observed were white. We did encounter quite a few black children in the corridors of this predominantly white school, and saw several black teachers. We met the principal, a white woman, on the way out of Kenilworth.

From this middle school, we drove across the city to Winbourne Elementary School. It is located in a predominantly black area of visibly poorer housing. The building appears to be older, but it is nicely maintained. The entry and waiting areas contain attractive displays. The school is all on one floor. Classrooms flooded with sunlight from many windows are located on both sides of a central corridor.

We went to a third grade room with perhaps a dozen black children in it. On the left there was a table where six children were seated with a young reading teacher. She was white, teaching five black and one white children - four boys and two girls. The other children and their regular teacher were working on questions written on the front board. They later went out for recess.

ILLUSTRATION FIVE



Winbourne Elementary School, 4501 Winbourne Avenue, Baton Rouge, LA. Located on the northern side of the city just off North Foster Drive (#62 on the Partial Mini-Map of EBRP Schools), Winbourne has a predominantly black student body, an integrated faculty, and a white, female principal. The facility is attractive and well maintained, with classrooms that get natural light. There is adequate play space for the children and to a visitor the building appears to be quiet and orderly.

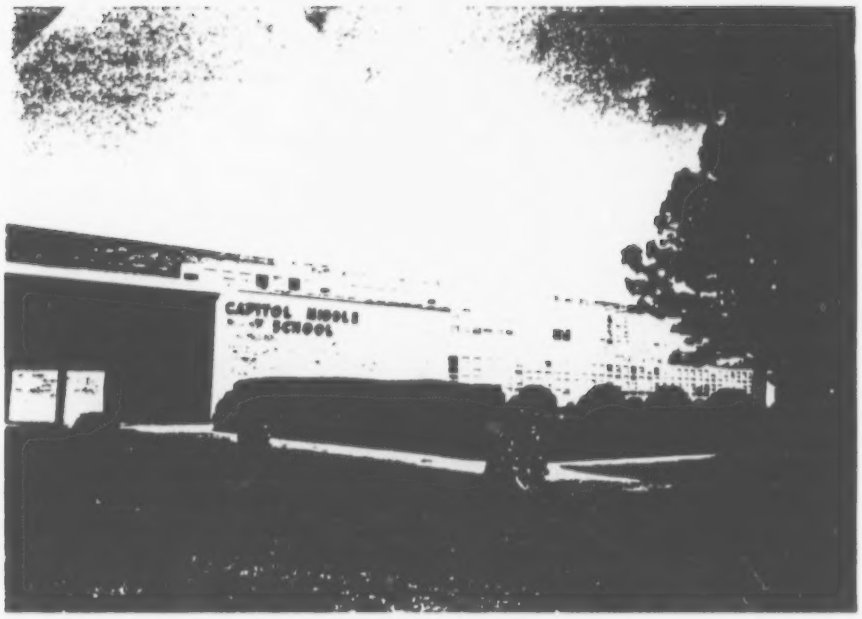
The reading specialist introduced the "h" family to the children - "ch," "sh," "th," and "wh". They then practiced these sounds and looked at words containing "ch". Toward the end of the forty minute lesson, the teacher went around to each child. She complimented them, giving them positive feedback. After the children left the room, the teacher-specialist remarked about how only a few inner city children can easily accept being told that they are doing well. Often they drop their eyes and seem to be embarrassed at being complimented. The regular teacher normally gives the reading lessons, but the specialist comes and teaches a lesson for the children needing remediation most weeks. This is one of Winbourne's "enhancements" and it had attracted the one little white boy who was making fine progress.

On our way back to the car, we met the school principal, a white woman. The teachers we had observed were white, too, but we could see that quite a few of the teachers in this black school are African Americans. My companion, the dyslexia coordinator, remarked afterward about how effective this middle aged, rather "dumpy" appearing principal is, mainly because she is a very orderly and well organized person. We had certainly seen a very secure and comfortable appearing school where learning seemed to be taking place.

Next we drove on to the central part of the city to visit Capitol Middle School. It is also an older building with windows. The entry and corridor were very clean and attractively decorated for the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday holiday coming up on January 20. After checking in at the school office, we walked to a classroom that was empty except for a teacher who entered after us. It is an English classroom, and we were soon talking with a vivascious white woman who had had a successful career in journalism prior to going back to become certified as an English teacher. She told us about her reading and writing enhancement program at Capitol.

Tuesday wasn't a very good day to observe because it was the first day of the second semester. The school principal, an older black man, had just been talking to the students at an assembly about their second term goals. Now about twenty children came into the classroom. Most were black children, but there were also three or four white students. The teacher talked with them about writing a three to four page essay on: (1) What they were proud of from the first semester. (2) What they weren't proud about in the first semester. (3) Their goals for achievement in the second semester. They were going to be writing out first drafts of the essay, but the class, which is a two hour one, would be broken up for lunch. The students began writing and we thanked the teacher and left to go to see the principal.

ILLUSTRATION SIX



Capitol Middle School, 4200 Gus Young Avenue, Baton Rouge, LA. This school is also a bit north of center-city Baton Rouge in a predominantly African American neighborhood. The school occupies a large two-story brick building on a good-sized campus. There are attractive displays along the corridors inside the school. Having a predominantly black student body, Capitol Middle School can accept only white students transferring in, or black students transferring out. There is an integrated faculty led by a black, male principal. The enhancements at Capitol Middle School feature a special health program, a Math Improvement Program, Project Read (which the researcher visited), and a Veterinary Program emphasizing animal husbandry and the biological sciences.

He warmly welcomed us, saying that he had grown up in this same part of Baton Rouge. He gives the appearance of being very calm and in control of the situation. He told us that he is glad to be at Capitol Middle School during the 1990's when so many positive changes are taking place. Although he will soon be retiring, he said that he wouldn't have missed participating in redesign. Capitol is still predominantly a black school, but it is now open to white students as well. The school also now has a special enhancement in the form of an English as a Second Language Program.

By now noon was approaching, so we excused ourselves. I drove the reading coordinator back to the School Redesign Office. I thanked her for allowing me to accompany on her rounds that morning and she wished me a safe trip back to Connecticut.

Television Coverage

An important source of news about the EBRP School System for me and doubtless many residents of Baton Rouge is Television Station WASB - Channel 9, a CBS affiliate. The nightly newscast at 10 P.M. frequently contained school-related segments. On January 9, 1992 the cameras took viewers to the auditorium where the school board had its meeting from 4 - 6:30 P.M. that day. There was a sequence showing education personnel engaged in informational picketing in front of the headquarters building before the meeting began. Then there were very short shots of the speakers representing the various collective bargaining organizations. These were followed by scenes of the school board members asking them questions. Finally, the decision to proceed with the public schools closure on January 13 without pay for teachers and other school employees was announced.

Viewers on the night of January 13, 1992 saw several teachers walk up to their school building early that morning. The doors were all locked and chained, so they couldn't get in. They were, however, demonstrating that they had reported for work and were unable to get to their normal work posts. This lockout, viewers learned, will be the basis of a lawsuit against the school board by their union for breach of contract. An attempt will be made by the plaintiffs to recover their lost pay. Although Monday was scheduled as a planning day, the teachers had agreed to teach regular classes on the first day of the second semester. According to the anchor person, the teachers may win their case. At any rate, the school board is likely to be discouraged from cutting any more days from the school calendar as a means of balancing the budget when they find out that they are embroiled in a new law suit.

The newscast on Tuesday, January 14, 1992 contained a segment about a new recommendation made by a blue ribbon committee and the Superintendent of Schools that the property tax rate be increased by 27.8 mills in order to provide adequate funding for the public schools. Viewers learned that only a small portion of the tax would be paid by homeowners whose property exceeds $75,000 in value. Most of the new millage would come from businesses and corporations in EBRP. This new request for funding, however, comes at a time when another referendum is already scheduled for the coming Saturday to act on a motion for a seven mill increase for the sheriff's office. Apparently the payless school closure day was intended to alert local taxpayers to the crisis in public school funding.

Wednesday, January 15, brought a segment based on research about the nature of dyslexia conducted by a team at Yale University. It came the day after I had spent a morning visiting a dyslexia unit and observing the work of several reading specialists. The television story stated that researchers have concluded that dyslexia isn't a single definable condition, but rather a general designation for a wide spectrum of problems that inhibit a person's communication. The difficulty with this presentation is that the average viewer probably won't realize that the Yale investigators were not denying that dyslexia exists. They merely confirmed that it has different degrees of retarding reading and may be manifested in a variety of ways. Although the dyslexia program is one of the proudest accomplishments of the redesign plan, WASB newscasters had't contacted any local educators for their comments on the Yale findings. This coverage, then, is another indication of the growing gap between the public school educators' desegregation and redesign initiatives and the Baton Rouge mass media.

A letter from our daughter in Baton Rouge, written in early March, 1992 contains this paragraph.

> I haven't heard anything new about desegregation or school redesign. Down here all of the news is about if metal detectors should be installed. A boy was shot in the head at a school about a month ago and so attention is focused on safety. [41]

CHAPTER THREE

NOTES

1 Tuck Thompson, "Redirecting Schools for Students Urged,"State-Times, Baton Rouge, LA, 4 June 1988, 1, 6-A. The DPC was an official agency of the EBRP School System funded by a Ford Foundation grant from 1988-1990.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

4 C.H. Thorton and W.T. Treat, "School Desegregation and Suspension in East Baton Rouge Parish: A Preliminary Report," Journal of Negro Education, 57, Fall, 1988, p. 484.

5 Ibid.

6 Ibid., pp. 489, 491, 499-501.

7 "Goals and Methods in Proposed Master Plan for Louisiana Education," Saturday Advocate, Baton Rouge, LA, 24 September 1989.

8 Curt Eysink, "School Program ADDs Up for Kids," Advocate, Baton Rouge, LA, December, 1989, 2-B. The exact date isn't given on the clipping that I obtained.

9 Peter Shinkle, "Dropout Prevention Program to Use Workshops to Fight Problem," State-Times, Baton Rouge, LA, 24 January 1990.

10 Peter Shinkle, "Dropout Prevention Program Grinds to a Halt as Funds Run Out," State-Times, Baton Rouge, LA, 9 February 1990, 1, 2-B. This had been one of twenty-two dropout prevention programs funded by the Ford Foundation nationally at this time.

11 Peter Shinkle, "Parents in EBRP Poll Say Quality Education No. 1," State-Times, Baton Rouge, LA, 17 January 1990, 1-A.

12 Peter Shinkle, "Evaluator Says School Redesign Working," State-Times, Baton Rouge, LA, 22 February 1990, 1, 2-B.

13 Scott Dyer, "Officials Inflate Enrollment in School Redesign," State-Times, Baton Rouge, LA, 14 March 1991, 1, 6-A.

14 Ibid.

15 Ibid. This extensive article contains specific analyses based on reporters' field visits of the redesign and desegregation situations at the ten schools examined in order to obtain enrollment statistics. The findings, to put it mildly, do not agree with the claims made by the EBRP School System spokespeople.

16 Scott Dyer, "Discrepancies were Surprise, Weiss Says," State-Times, Baton Rouge, LA, 14 March 1991, 1, 8-A.

17 Ibid.

18 Ibid.

19 "Report Says School Officials Inflated Redesign Enrollment," Morning Advocate, Baton Rouge, LA, 15 March 1991, 1, 11-A.

20 Scott Dyer, "School Redesign Still Needs Careful Study," Morning Advocate, Baton Rouge, LA, 18 March 1991.

21 John Rice, "Redesign Student Numbers Lowered in the Latest Report," State-Times, Baton Rouge, LA, 28 March 1991, 1-A.

22 Ibid.

23 John Rice, "Report Lauds Redesign Plan, But Lists Only 6% in Transfers," State-Times, Baton Rouge, LA, 3 April 1991, 1, 6-A.

24 Ibid.

25 "School Redesign Losing Credibility," State-Times, Baton Rouge, LA, 8 April 1991.

26 Curt Eysink, "A School System that Can't Count," Morning Advocate, Baton Rouge, LA, 3 December 1991.

27 "Better Racial Balance Planned for Faculties of Parish Schools," State-Times, Baton Rouge, LA, 3 May 1991

28 John Rice, "Board O.K.'s Neighborhood School Plan, State-Times, Baton Rouge, LA, 14 June 1991, 1, 8-A.

29 Curt Eysink, "Weiss Attacks Grant Process," Morning Advocate, Baton Rouge, LA, 12 August 1991, 1, 2-B.

30 John Rice, "Board Members Get Sneak Preview at New School Desegregation Plan," State-Times, Baton Rouge, LA, 4 September, 1991, 1, 4-A.

31 Ibid.

32 Ibid.

33 "Debate Begins on Deseg Plan," Morning Advocate, Baton Rouge, LA, 4 November 1991. There was an interpretive article by Billy Gibson, "Public Responds to Deseg Proposal," South Baton Rouge Journal 3(5), December, 1991, pp. 1, 14-15. Gibson had observed the rancor and disputes at the various public hearings on the school desegregation policy proposal. He seems to be more sympathetic with the quandry facing the school board, and quotes Bob Meador, a board member, who thinks that the plan should be approved, as saying, "If God made a plan I don't think it would satisfy everyone with the whims and problems they have. If we can get this plan implemented and funded, it'll be a blessing to blacks and whites. I don't think it creates additional problems, but it solves many of the past problems. That's the bottom line." Meador represents District Nine which includes parts of South and Southeast Baton Rouge, Gibson points out - in other words, his constituency is predominantly middle class white taxpayers.

34 Curt Eysink, "School Unions in Tough Spot," Morning Advocate, Baton Rouge, LA, Metro-State Section, "Commentary," 7 January 1992, p. 9-B.

35 Frank A. Stone, Participant/Observation of the EBRP School Board Meeting, Headquarters Auditorium, 9 January 1992, 4-6:30 P.M.

36 Curt Eysink, "78,814 Misused at Capitol High, Report Estimates," Morning Advocate, Baton Rouge, LA, "Metro-State Section," 8 January 1992, 2-B

37 Stone, 9 January 1992 School Board Meeting

38 Ibid.

39 Ibid.

40 Frank A. Stone, interview with Arminta Bolden, EBRP School System Coordinator of School Redesign, at the Redesign Office, Valley Service Center, Baton Rouge, LA, 10 January 1992, 2:15-3:15 P.M.

41 Letter from Ruth S. Stone, 4735 Government Street, Baton Rouge, LA to Mr. and Mrs. Frank A. Stone, 8 March 1992.

Chapter Four

Summary of Findings and Conclusions

Reflection on the dynamics of public school desegregation and redesign in EBRP produces a compendium of findings. They are suggestive for Connecticut educators and the general public concerned with achieving both equity and excellence. The EBRP data demonstrates that public school policy is always made in the context of cultural and historical factors that influence the available options. Economic and political conditions must always be taken into consideration if sound school policy is to result. This complex social situation also interacts with the school system when fundamental policy changes such as desegregation and redesign are being implemented. Outcomes, in the event, are seldom exactly what was anticipated due to the myriad of aspects that are impinging on them. For example, when a student packs a handgun and goes to school, shooting someone else, the public perception of the state of public education is affected, whether the incident occurs in Baton Rouge or Hartford.

Similar to EBRP, Greater Hartford (and any other metropolitan region in the State of Connecticut) has a cultural-historical heritage that must be thoroughly examined and interpreted when plans are being made to change school policies.[1] Our school status, like their's, is somewhat unstable and inflamatory. The evidence presented in this study of the EBRP School System indicates that desegregation and redesign aren't simple problems that can be resolved with neat, quick solutions. They exhibit all of the characteristics of complex dilemmas. While dilemmas must also be addressed and (hopefully) meliorated, it simply isn't possible to devise interventions that will be immediate, totally successful, and universally acceptable. As is the case in EBRP, in Greater Hartford and elsewhere in Connecticut, approaches that will "satisfice" are going to be necessary.

The mobilization procedures employed by the NAACP and EBRP School System leaders are instructive. The federal court litigation, itself, was an important means of publicizing the local crisis of defacto public school segregation. The court orders empowered the school authorities to make some efforts to desegregate the public schools. Over time, however, they also generated resistance and white backlash that inhibited the program.

It is evident that the EBRP school authorities drew on national organizations for inspiration and support. Doubtless other linkages were developed as well, but those forged with the Ford Foundation and the Panasonic Foundation, in particular, have been demonstrated to have had a considerable impact. What was done in the EBRP public schools wasn't only worked out by local people in light of their own understanding of their crisis, but was informed by national movements and trends. The disadvantage of joining national, foundation-funded support networks, apparently, is that their commitments are usually made for limited periods of time. Often new initiatives are begun, as a result, that subsequently are left without funding. They hypothetically will have demonstrated their value by that time, so local support can be obtained or the school budget stretched to cover their costs. The trouble is that times of economic recession, such as EBRP and Greater Hartford have been undergoing, reduce the available fiscal resources. Then worthwhile programs may have to be terminated before conclusive evidence of their effectiveness can be compiled.

EBRP also employs the device of forming blue ribbon committees to investigate crucial school issues and make recommendations concerning them. Admittedly these committees are the creatures of the Superintendent of Schools and may be unduly influenced by the school system administrators. They do, however, confer credibility on certain policy options, making it easier for the Board of Education to vote to implement them if public approval has been generated.

The available evidence, however, indicates that there was slippage between the EBRP school redesign plan as conceived and adopted, and its implementation and evaluation. The original time frame of five years was too short because there was an elaborate, gradual process of beginning with a few pilot demonstration schools and then disseminating the plan year by year. It becomes clear that there was no way that school redesign realistically could have permeated the EBRP School System in five years flat. Therefore the evidence couldn't be garnered quickly enough to convince skeptical school personnel and the public that the program works.

Another serious impediment, in the opinion of this researcher, was the confusion about appropriate research methodologies for assessing the redesign plan. Successfully implementing school redesign requires extensive professional re-education. Teachers and administrators had to learn processes of organizational development and site-based management. They had to be prepared to provide enhancements and enrichment. For the first time, they had to learn to collaborate in making decisions. They had to discover various strategies for marketing their schools and attracting community

participation and support.

Is it any wonder in the midst of all these restructuring struggles that inquiry methods went by the board? When the newspaper journalists and reporters become adversarial, it is because they assume that redesign evaluation will conform to conventional empirical criteria. They are expecting the school system to deliver statistics based on two categories: literally black and white. Therefore they aren't interested in data that is based on a much more sophisticated recognition of extensive ethnic and socio-economic diversity. Also, they campaign for a pre- and post-intervention comparision. They want to be able to measure certain outcomes at redesign institutions with those at "conventional" schools. They fail to realize that these are both inoperable categories. There is obviously a wide range of both the designated redesign and conventional programs. All of them aren't static but constantly in flux. And often the proposed criteria, such as students' scores on standardized achievement tests, aren't comparable for many reasons.

The EBRP School System authorities seem to have realized that applied inquiry methodologies would be necessary in order to assess desegregation and redesign. They failed, however, to provide any specifications for them. They don't seem to have organized in-service seminars and workshops so that the educators could learn appropriate research methodologies. Worse, they excluded the representatives of the mass media, creating a mood of hostility. Then, in order to get support for the redesign program, they hopelessly confused it with desegregation. There is unquestionably a relationship between the two, but many different assumptions about what it is were engendered. It seems that in the end, data was being manufactured to address selected audiences, with little concern about its validity.

It seems clear that part of implementing the redesign plan depended on getting the federal magnet school grants. If eight million dollars had been received by the EBRP School System from Washington, D.C. during any biennial period, this would have gone a long way toward vindicating the program. Then the local taxpayers could have been told that, yes, redesign was costing them $1,900,000 a year, but it had gotten national recognition and brought in more than twice that sum in an external grant. We can speculate that with this validation, the EBRP schoolpeople would have been home free. Lacking it, redesign began to be perceived by many people as a costly liability. This aspect of the findings illustrates that schoolpeople are quite right when they talk about the risk of introducing major policy changes.

On the other hand, of course, schools function in dynamic situ-

ations in which major changes are taking place anyhow. It is hard to discern which changes occur due to plan, and which are products of external circumstances. The only real option is whether the public school system will be proactive or reactive. EBRP school leaders sincerely attempted to become proactive, but the results of their plan were not as anticipated.

According to my observations, however, this doesn't mean that redesign failed to foster any desegregation at all. At the three schools I visited, the impact couldn't be assessed by using overall statistics. But I did see several classrooms in which there was now some integration where previously there had been none or very little. I met teachers and administrators who are working effectively in interracial settings. Nobody is claiming that all of the desegregation goals have been met, but some progress has been made. At the same time, the EBRP School System, like school systems everywhere, has to cope with a very disturbing era. All the manifestations of social ills such as drug and alcohol abuse, teenaged pregnancy, AIDS, and un- or underemployment stalk Baton Rouge, just as they do Bridgeport, Hartford and New Haven. Personally, I doubt that even the most effective desegregation and redesign plans known to humanity will mitigate these pervasive ills. It seems to me that with desegregation and redesign, the EBRP schools were doing as much as any institutions can to right these social wrongs.

Finally, I contend that EBRP provides Connecticut with a model of centralization and a form of decentralization. The county political bounds in Louisiana form a large enough metropolitan school district that many means of school desegregation are possible. The much smaller town school systems in Connecticut inhibit integration because they require much more costly administrative bureaucracies. More high paid administrators preside over miniscule systems. Yet, as the economic data demonstrate, Greater Hartford has far greater fiscal resources than EBRP if its citizens want to deploy them for desegregation and redesign.

Many of the relatively successful interventions in the EBRP School System were feasible because it comprises a hundred and one schools and serves almost 60,000 students. Although the concept isn't popular with many people in Connecticut, after making this study I can't conceive of any effective school desegregation in our state that doesn't include restructuring governance. It appears to me that the independent town systems that we still have today are obsolete in light of the massive changes that have taken place in our society. Restructuring, however, is going to be a very difficult and upsetting experience for many citizens in our "land of steady habits." This is so whether it is done voluntarily or carried out by court order. If site-based school management could be instituted, this would help preserve some local control.

We too, like EBRP, are confronting the dual goals of equity and excellence. If we succeed in bringing to an end defacto public school segregation in our state at the cost of further jeopardizing the teaching of basic literacy skills, nobody will be satisfied. If we change our virtually completely white single-race schools in suburbia but take away their academic rigor, few people are going to consider that to be desireable progress. Connecticut's key question is how to achieve social justice in schooling while, at the same time, maintaining and increasing the quality of the education for everyone.

Chapter Four

NOTES

1 See Frank A. Stone, compiler, African American Connecticut. African Origins, New England Roots. The Peoples of Connecticut Series, Number Nine. Storrs, CT: The Isaac N. Thut World Education Center, 1991. Copies are on sale at the UConn Coop.

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Note: Copies of all of this documentation, as well as the field notes of the study, are available to qualified researchers at The Isaac N. Thut World Education Center (TWEC), Room 415, Charles B. Gentry Building, Storrs Campus, The University of Connecticut. Please call (203) 486-0243 in order to make an appointment.

GLOSSARY

acceleration for all - a nationally recognized program of the "Accelerated School" developed at Stanford University and implemented in some East Baton Rouge Parish (EBRP) schools. It is a comprehensive program designed for grades Pre-K through 5 focusing on grade level and above performance in basic skills, problem solving, and parent involvement. Another aspect is the Power of Positive Students (POPS).

action plan - each local school's step by step redesign implementation program.

at-risk - children or adolescents who are most likely not to achieve well academically in school, be suspended or expelled, become pregnant or get someone pregnant, abuse alcohol/drugs, or drop-out of school.

Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) - The inability of a child or adolescent to focus their attention on anything for more than a few minutes at a time.

Battle of Baton Rouge - This term actually refers to three separate engagements. The Spanish overpowered a small British garrison in the First Battle of Baton Rouge on September 21, 1779. The United States-born citizens of the city rebelled against Spanish rule in the Second Battle of Baton Rouge on September 23, 1810, establishing the West Florida Republic which was annexed to the United States three months later. Union forces captured Baton Rouge during the Civil War in the Third Battle of Baton Rouge on April 5, 1862. This last event is still commemorated annually at Magnolia Cemetery.

bayou - a small stream, arm or outlet of a lake, or river, usually with sluggish water and in a swampy area. Louisiana's chief bayous such as Bayou Lafourche, Bayou Manchac, Bayou Plaquemine, and Bayou Teche are all within fifty miles of Baton Rouge as is the great Atchafalaya Swamp. Here live "swampers" who subsist by cutting timber, gathering moss, fishing, or working in the oil fields.

black Baton Rouge - Many black families have opted to go back to the outlying black rural communities in EBRP, commuting everyday to work. Those who live in urban Baton Rouge settled in areas such as Bird Station, the Bottom, Easy Town, Eden Park, the Lake, Scotlandville)also known as "the avenues" or "the field,") and Zion City. Up into the 1950's Cheneyville High School (now Northeast High), which only went to the tenth

grade was the only one outside of Baton Rough in the Parish that black students could attend. So if they wanted a better education they had to come into Baton Rouge in order to complete high school.

black rural communities - the majority of the black people living in Baton Rouge today have their personal roots and family ties in the surrounding rural towns such as Baywood, Denham Springs, Greenwell Springs, Port Hudson, Pride, and Zachary that are in EBRP. These were and still are areas of intense concentration of black folk tradition because the majority of families there have always been basically self-sufficient.

Cajun - An Americanization of "Acadian" referring to the homeland of a French-speaking ethnic community that once lived in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island until they were expelled by the British in 1755. Shipped to different lands, many survivors of the Expulsion eventually regrouped in Louisiana, especially in the area between New Orleans and Baton Rouge, and to the West. Today the best known Cajun is Governor Edwin Edwards, who is bilingual in English and French. The Council for the Development of French in Louisiana (CODOFIL) was formed by the state legislature in 1968. It works to promote and preserve the French heritage, but earlier it was against state law to speak French in a Louisiana public school.

Catfish Town - Prior to the Civil War Baton Rouge had a small black population. During Reconstruction blacks migrated into town from plantations, establishing a sizeable segregated community known as "Catfish Town" along the bank of the Mississippi River. Baton Rouge was fifty-nine percent black by 1880, but this dropped to thirty-nine percent by 1920 due to the absorption of other ethnic groups.

clusters - EBRP public schools that are grouped according to the desegregation plan ordered by the Federal Middle District Court of Louisiana. Students are assigned to a "home school" within each cluster. There are ten clusters of three or four schools in the 1991-1992 school year.

Coalition Helping in Public Schools (CHIPS) - Community agencies that support and help to strengthen public education in EBRP such as "Adopt-a-School," "Big Buddy," "Volunteers in Public Schools (VIPS)," "Grants-for-Teachers," "Junior Achievement," and "Friends of Public Education (FPE)." Parent-Teacher Organizations are also active.

court orders - Decisions by the Federal District Court requiring EBRP to desegregate the public schools issued in 1956, 1962, 1970, 1981, 1988 and 1991.

Creole - A person in Louisiana born in the region during the eighteenth or early nineteenth cunturies, but of French ancestry. Creoles fatheredles geno de couler libres - free people of color. These mulatto children of Creole men in Louisiana were educated at a time when, according to the Black Code, it was a crime to teach blacks to read and write in most parts of the South.

cultural strata - Milton B. Newton, Jr. in "The Material Cultural Landscape of the Florida Parishes in Historical Perspective" claims that there are a half-dozen cultural strata in this region which includes Baton Rouge. These are: a Native American tracer, a French outpost, Scots-English, Upland South regional culture, African American, and Americanization. Two more, Sicilian Italian and German, could be added for Baton Rouge, as well as Cajun.

desegregation - policies, sometimes court ordered, to abolish racial bias in school populations so that the racial composition of public schools represents the racial make-up of the community.

drop-out - students who leave school without completing their program of study and qualifying for a certificate or diploma.

dyslexia - a disorder manifested in difficulty with learning to read, write, and/or spell despite average to above average intelligence, socio-cultural opportunity, and conventional instruction. As many as fifteen percent of American students may be classified as dyslexic. EBRP has the first program addressing the needs of dyslexic students, grades one through twelve, in Louisiana. Phonics, decoding and comprehension are stressed. Small sequential, structured steps are emphasized. Teachers for this program were prepared at Southern Methodist University, Dallas, TX.

enhancement - a special focus available at a school in addition to the regular basic program of instruction. It is intended to make that school more attractive to parents and students who want that type of focus and may therefore voluntarily transfer in order to get it.

enrichment - this refers to academic increments to regular basic programs of instruction in order to make them more challenging. Often attending a school with an enriched program assures automatic entry into a desireable higher level school.

extended day - schools with programs that begin before conventional institutions are open and continue after students are dismissed from conventional schools. Brownfields Elementary, for example, designed especially to meet the needs of working parents, opens at 7 A.M. and closes at 6 P.M. Highlands Elementary goes to 4:30 P.M. or 5:15 P.M. in the afternoon with fourteen enrichment activities offered during the extended time.

external audit team - a group appointed in each school district in EBRP to receive and review self-evaluation reports from school advisory committees or councils, verify the stated outcomes, and recommend either approval or intervention.

Florida Parishes - the part of today's Louisiana, altogether a bit less than five thousand square miles, that was once included in the Spanish Province of West Florida. The eight Florida Parishes are East Baton Rouge, East and West Feliciana, Livingston, St. Helena, Tangipahoa, St. Tammany, and Washington.

gifted - EBRP provides state-funded services for students who have been identified as being academically talented through testing according to Louisiana State Department of Education criteria for pre-school through middle and high schools. It is the largest gifted program in Louisiana with resources, self-contained, and departmentalized services.

higher order thinking skills (HOTS) - a computer enhanced elective program that is available in some EBRP middle schools. It is claimed that HOTS raises academic achievement and improves students' personal self-confidence.

high intensive language training (HILT)/bilingual education - an instructional program designed for limited English proficient (LEP) students to provide intensive English language learning so that they can meet grade promotion and graduation requirements. Identification, assessment and instruction to assure that EBRP is in compliance with the Office of Civil Rights mandate to meet all LEP students' needs are regularly provided.

Houma tribe - the original American Indian inhabitants of the Baton Rouge region north of Bayagoulas and south of Natchez. Their language was in the family called the Muskogean group. When the French came in 1699 the Houma tribe numbered about three hundred fifty families.

integration - removing the barriers keeping a diverse population from functioning as an integral whole with more optimum and harmonious interracial relationships.

Istrouma - refers to the native American Indians of the Baton Rouge area in the writing of Andre Penicaut, a ship's carpenter who accompanied a French Canadian, Pierre le Moyne, Sieur d'Iberville on the 1699 expedition that reached Baton Rouge. Apparently the word is a corruption of the Choctau words for "red pole" which were iti humma. It was this post painted red that separated the land of the Bayngoulas from the Houma's territory. Baton Rouge takes its name from the French words for "red pole."

The Louisiana State University - LSU began in 1860 as the state "Seminary of Learning." Moved to central Baton Rouge in 1869, it was transferred to its present campus in 1923. LSU now has some 27,000 students at the Baton Rouge campus taught by over twelve hundred faculty.

Lower Mississippi Valley - a fertile alluvial plain fifty to a hundred miles wide and over four hundred miles long with Baton Rouge in its southern portion. Silt laid down by the river together with the area's fifty inch annual rainfall make the lower valley agriculturally productive. West of the river is prime cotton and sugar cane country. Rice farming began after World War Two and earlier indigo was raised. Now fish farming (catfish and crayfish) is being done in the rice paddies when they lie fallow every third year.

magnet school programs - There are five magnet schools in EBRP. Each has either a special professional orientation such as pre-engineering or medicine, or an accelerated academic program designed to attract able students of all ethnicities, races and socio-economic classes from throughout the parish.

marketing - publicity and public relations regarding enhancements, enrichments and other educational advantages that may attract students and parents, causing them to voluntarily enroll in a school where their presence will reduce racial inbalance.

neighborhood schools - educational institutions, usually elementary schools, that are located in a sector of the community whose children attend them and comprise their constituency. The ideal is that the school be within walking distance of all of its constituency and function as a neighborhood center. The chief problem is that many neighborhoods are racially segregated.

oversight committee - a blue ribbon team for the entire EBRP School System that acts as a clearing house for local school audits and assesses systemwide progress toward achieving stated goals. If then approved by the EBRP School Board successful programs will be designated "exemplary status sites."

pairs - a land area from the attendance zone of each paired elementary school is assigned to another school, changing the attendance boundaries and contributing to desegregating both schools. There are three elementary school pairs in EBRP in 1991-1992.

Panasonic Foundation - established in 1984 as the Matsushita Foundation, this is a private, American grant-making organization with a ten million dollar endowment from the Matsushita Electric Corporation of America, given in commemoration of the company's twenty-fifth anniversary. Its name was changed to the Panasonic Foundation in 1990. Its goal is a fundamental reexamination of the entire American educational system and a restructuring of the way schools and school systems conduct their business. EBRP Public School policies reflect the policy agenda advocated by the Panasonic Foundation.

pilot schools - the first public institutions of learning in the EBRP School System to implement school redesign in 1988-1989.

plantation - a large agricultural estate where various field crops were raised. The planter lived in the "Big House," often a mansion, while the cultivation was done by black field hands who were slaves living in the slave quarters. Throughout Louisiana in 1860 there were about 1,600 plantations worked by more than fifty slaves each. Many of the white planters were millionaires in that era. Baton Rouge is along the famous "Plantation Road" that follows the Mississippi River. Magnolia Mound Plantation and Mount Hope Plantation are within the city limits.

Port of Baton Rouge - This is the farthest inland, deep-water port on the Gulf of Mexico. The port is equipped to handle both river barges and ocean-going vessels. The Port Allen lock on the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway from Florida to Texas is nearby. About thirty million tons of water-borne freight passes through the Port of Baton Rouge each year.

Project Read - a funded program in the EBRP School System designed to help students overcome reading difficulties through a direct, concrete approach in which systematic phonics, comprehension, and written expression are stressed in grades one through three. Middle and high school programs emphasize written expression and reading comprehension. The program is an alternative to basal instruction.

railroad towns - Railroad construction in the nineteenth century caused towns to be located for the convenience of the trains. The railroad companies wanted to fill their planned neighborhoods or settlements, so they built churches and social halls to attract settlers. Ethnic communities such as blacks, white Anglo-Scotch-Irish, or Italians would then people these residential sectors or "quarters." This historic pattern of the railroad towns such as Baker and Zackary in EBRP is quite different from once white dominated communities that date from before emancipation.

redesign - the term used to denote all of the ways that are implemented in the EBRP School System to improve it, while at the same time increasing the racial balance in the public schools.

refinery complex - sometimes termed "chemical alley," Baton Rouge is the hub of a huge petro-chemical complex with many refineries and other installations. The first was built in 1903. The Baton Rouge oil fields were discovered in 1935. Baton Rouge is also the terminus of a major pipeline bringing in oil from southwestern Louisiana. Oil and gas production, in which Louisiana ranks third behind Texas and Alaska, and second only to Texas, respectively, is declining. The high cost of recovery from new fields limits development.

restructuring - efforts in "partner" urban school districts that are related to the Panasonic Foundation to support radical change, encourage risk-taking, reallocate both financial and human resources, and commit to ongoing systemic school-based school reform. Besides the EBRP School System, the other restructure partners are Allentown, PA; Englewood, N.J.; Minneapolis, MN; Rochester, N.Y.; San Diego, CA; Santa Fe, N.M.; and Seattle, WA.

school board - The EBRP has twelve school districts with a single member of the board elected to represent the citizens in their district and the schools located in them. Currently four women and eight men comprise the board. Mrs. Eva R. Legard, the chairperson, is black. There are three other black members and eight white members of the board in 1991-1992.

school effectiveness - an "effective school" is defined as one in which students achieve at a high level. The term refers especially to increased student proficiency at basic skills. Louisiana's program resulted from its first accountability legislation (LA R.S. 17:391) enacted in 1977. This required that statewide achievement tests be established. I was told that aspects of Louisiana's school effectiveness program were influenced by what had been done in Connecticut.

site-based management - developing local school committees comprised of parents, teachers, staff and administrators. These Councils have the authority and power to make certain vital decisions concerning their schools such as personnel deployment and budget priorities.

special incentives - attractive opportunities for students such as honor roll recognition, a birthday bulletin board, pizza parties for students with straight A's, book and science fairs, being "bus rider of the week," or "the individual class student of the week." These are all intended to motivate students to maintain good conduct and be academic achievers.

Southern University - is a public, tax-supported facility, largely funded by appropriations from the Louisiana State Legislature. This predominantly black institution of higher learning was moved to Baton Rouge from New Orleans in 1914. Enrolling over 5,000 students, it is the largest black university in the United States.

Appendix One

A BATON ROUGE CHRONOLOGY

1519 Alonzo Alvarez de Pineda explores the Mississippi River.

1541 Hernando de Soto scouts northern Louisiana and claims the Mississippi River for Spain.

April 9, 1682 Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle, claims all of the territory in the Mississippi River watershed for King Louis XIV of France.

March 17, 1699 A French expedition led by Pierre le Moyne, Sieur d'Iberville, and sent by King Louis XIV of France, first sees the site of today's Baton Rouge.

1722 An unsuccessful settlement called Dirombourg or Baton Rouge is begun by the Company of the Indies, based on a land grant to the Dartaguette family of France.

November 3, 1762 France cedes New Orleans and the Territory of Louisiana west of the Mississippi River to Spain in the Treaty of Fontainebleau.

1763 Acadians, known as "Cajuns" in Louisiana, begin migrating to the area of St. Martinville.

1763 By the Treaty of Paris ending the Seven Years War in Europe, Great Britain acquires from Spain both East and West Florida, and from France the portion of Louisiana north of the Isle of Orleans and east of the Mississippi River. This marks the beginning of the British settlement and start of the plantation system in Baton Rouge.

1779 Spanish colonial Governor Bernardo de Galvez captures Baton Rouge from British forces.

October 1, 1800 Spain returns the Louisiana territory to France in the Treaty of San Idelfonso, but Baton Rouge remains in Spanish hands.

December 30, 1803 The United States takes formal possession of the Louisiana Territory, consisting of 828,000 square miles purchased from France, but not including Spanish West Florida where Baton Rouge was located.

1810 Baton Rouge becomes the capital of the Republic of West Florida or Feliciana, after a successful revolt against Spanish colonial rule.

December 10, 1810 United States troops peacefully enter Baton Rouge and the area becomes part of the U.S.A.

1815	The last battle of the War of 1812 is won by United States General (later President) Andrew Jackson at New Orleans.
1821	John J. Audubon sets up his studio to paint the birds of the United States in New Orleans, often working in St. Francisville, East Feliciana Parish and EBRP.
1850	Baton Rouge becomes the capital of Louisiana.
January 26, 1861	Louisiana secedes from the Union. It joins the Confederacy on March 21, 1861.
May 8, 1862	Baton Rouge has the United States flag raised over its Arsenal, and on May 29, 1862 the town is occupied by Union troops.
August 5, 1862	Confederate forces unsuccessfully attempt to drive the Union army out of Baton Rouge. The Confederates, however, do maintain a stronghold at nearby Fort Hudson.
June 23, 1864	A Republican convention revised the state constitution of Louisiana abolishing slavery.
March 11, 1868	Another constitutional revision grants blacks full social and civil rights.
June 25, 1868	Louisiana is re-admitted into the Union.
1874	A black uprising at Coushatta is put down by the White League.
1877	Reconstruction ends and home rule is restored to Louisiana.
1898	New voting qualifications disenfranchise most blacks, and the "Plessy v. Ferguson" decision of the U.S. Supreme Court makes "separate but equal" the law of the land.
1928-1932	Governor Huey P. Long obtains legislation providing free textbooks to the public schools for the first time.
1956	Governor Earl Long signs into law a bill banning inter-racial athletic contests and social events.
1958	Following the Brown v. Board of Education decision of the U.S. Supreme Court in 1954, legislation is passed by the Louisiana State Legislature in Baton Rouge authorizing the closing of desegregated schools.
September, 1963	Twenty-seven black students in Baton Rouge begin attending previously all-white schools. This is the first high school integration in the state.
1986	Recession leads to large cuts in the state revenues and reductions in the expenditures for education, health, and social services.

Source: Joseph N. Kane, Steven Ansovin, and Janet Podell, editors. Facts about the States. N.Y.: The H.W. Wilson Company, 1989. "Louisiana," pp. 173-184.

Appendix Two

A BATON ROUGE EVENTS CALENDAR

January	Battle of New Orleans Day, January 8 Robert E. Lee's Birthday, January 19 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr's Birthday, January 20 Krewe of Mystique Parade
February	George Washington's Birthday Abraham Lincoln's Birthday
March	Mardi Gras Holiday, March 2-3 Annual Festival of Contemporary Music, LSU
April	River City Blues Festival (This is an outdoor celebration highlighting local blues talent along with ethnic food concessions.)
May	Fest For All (Children's Pavillion, arts and crafts, food) "Brown Bag" Variety Entertainment at Lafayette Park
June	Confederate Memorial Day, June 3 Jambalaya Festival in nearby Gonzales (Cooking contest, judged art show, music and dancing.)
July	Bastille Day Celebration (Music, food, dancing, and Roman Catholic masses celebrated in French. Sponsored by the Council for the Development of French in Louisiana.)
August	Battle of Baton Rouge Commemorative Ceremony at Magnolia Cemetery under the auspices of the Foundation for Historical Louisiana Annual Louisiana Shrimp and Petroleum Festival and Fair at Morgan City, seventy-seven miles away. (Parade, outdoor mass, blessing of the fleet, boat racing, and fireworks) Huey P. Long Day, August 30
September	Festivals Acadiens at Lafayette about fifty miles away. (Cajun culture with Cajun and Zydeco music, hot and spicy food.)

October	"Plantation Day," at the Magnolia Mound Plantation House, 2161 Nicholson Drive, Baton Rouge, LA. (Crafts, folklore, entertainment and food of the plantation era.)
	Great Baton Rouge State Fair
	Annual Fall Crafts Festival, Old State Capitol Grounds, Baton Rouge
November	Fall Arts and Crafts Show, Gonzales Civic Center
December	Bonfires on the Levee
	Holiday Open Houses at Magnolia Mound and Mount Hope Plantations, Baton Rouge

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Appendix Three

December 6, 1991

To Whom It May Concern:

Dr. Frank Stone, Professor of Education, University of Connecticut in Storrs, is an active member of the Public Education Committee, Department of Church in Society, Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ.

The Public Education Committee proposed a pronouncement and proposal for action, "In Support of Quality, Integrated Education for All Children in Public Schools," which was adopted at the UCC General Synod Eighteen in Virginia in July 1991.

We have heard that your Magnet Schools in the Baton Rouge Parish are pioneering quite successfully in the area of integration and quality education. Dr. Stone will be visiting in your locale early in January 1992. We hope that you will receive him cordially and share your insight and progress in this arena of public education.

Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

Kathryn R. Dreher
Chair, Public Education Committee,
Connecticut Conference, United Church of Christ

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